



Independent Review of Education in Tasmania

FINAL REPORT TO THE
TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT

DECEMBER 2024

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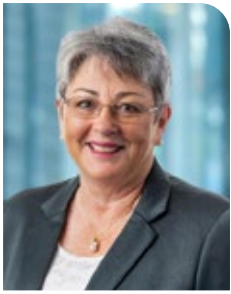
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Foreword from the Independent Reviewer



It has been my privilege to lead this Review and to have had the opportunity to talk with Tasmania's children and young people, as well as educators and adults who care deeply about Tasmania's future.

My sincere thanks to all of you with whom I spoke, and those of you who responded to survey questions and provided written submissions. You certainly provided me and the small secretariat team with plenty to think about.

I learned that Tasmanians are proud and like to punch above their weight. Tasmania has a history of producing some of Australia's best, brightest and most talented, and is doing so in numbers that are greater than its small population would suggest is possible.

Tasmanians from all walks of life, and across all ages, told the Review stories of wanting to get ahead, to lead fulfilling and rewarding lives. Unanimously, the sentiment expressed to the Review, was that education is the foundation for ensuring children and young people are confident going into the world, have a sense of belonging, meaning and purpose, can contribute to society, can engage in the community and can create the world they want for themselves.

However, like other places in the country with similar populations and geography, there is no getting away from the fact that Tasmania's Education System faces challenges. Improving education outcomes is vital to Tasmania's future.

I appreciated the frankness and honesty with which people engaged about what was working, what was possible and what was missing. The optimism and belief that there is a great opportunity in Tasmania to create a high performing education system across all schooling sectors exists. Building on the strengths of what exists and being intentional about what matters is the job of Governments, schools, families, communities, businesses and employers. Together, you ensure Tasmania's children and young people are supported to succeed in life.

In that light, I offer the Review's findings and recommendations for consideration by the Tasmanian Government. I am confident that a strong and sustained focus on a limited number of aligned priorities will result in improved outcomes for Tasmanian children and young people across the State.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki Baylis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vicki Baylis

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgment of Aboriginal land

The Review acknowledges and pays respects to the traditional and original owners of the lands on which we conducted the Review, particularly the Aboriginal peoples of Iutruwita. The Review celebrates the rich and diverse cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia. The Review also acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, within whom culture lives and grows.

Further acknowledgements

The Review would like to acknowledge those who have supported the Review including:

- ▶ The inspirational children and young people who met with the Review;
- ▶ All who submitted responses to the Review consultation activity and completed the Review survey;
- ▶ The schools that took the time to meet with the Review and share their context;
- ▶ The education sectors who facilitated visits to schools;
- ▶ The Review Secretariat Alex Tay, Diana Godwin, Linzie Birchley and Christian Henderson; and
- ▶ Finally, critical friends of the Review, Jenny Donovan, John Cleary and Sue Kennedy.

Executive Summary

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Introduction

If Tasmania only has the capacity to do one thing well over the next decade, then it should stay the course on its Lifting Literacy initiative. Literacy is a key foundation for students to be able to engage successfully in learning and access the curriculum throughout their years of schooling and chosen pathways. Being relentless in equipping teachers with the knowledge, skills and resources to use evidence-based teaching approaches will have the greatest influence on student progress and achievement.

Improvement at large scale requires a laser like focus on what matters and takes time to become evident. The early success stories are emerging for individual students and in some schools. With multi-partisan commitment to unwaveringly support the implementation and monitoring of the Lifting Literacy initiative, there is every reason to expect sustained growth for Tasmania's children and young people in literacy.

As a small jurisdiction, Tasmania's Education System will need to follow the evidence and choose where to invest energy, effort and resources to make the greatest gains. The approach taken with the Lifting Literacy initiative could act as an exemplar for how any other priorities are pursued over the next decade. Evidence-based, explicit and systemic teaching practice should underpin all teaching.

About the Review

The scope of the Review included the government and non-government school sectors with a focus on Kindergarten to Year 12.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) asked the Review to focus on five themes:

- 1 Defining educational success**
- 2 Strengthening engagement and supports for all learners at all stages of their education**
- 3 Outcomes at the conclusion of the formal years of schooling**
- 4 Support for our teaching workforce**
- 5 Accountability for improved outcomes**

The Review was conducted over 18 weeks and the full Report is not intended to represent a comprehensive, deep dive into each of the themes outlined in the ToR. The Report outlines a summary of key themes and provides findings and recommendations for Government and the Tasmanian Education System to consider. The Review used publicly accessible and comparable data across the three educational sectors.

Demographic change over the next decade

Tasmania faces challenges and opportunities over the next decade due to its changing population, including for the provision of education. Population projections modelled by the Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance project fewer students over the coming decade.

While there are no similar projections for teachers or the educator workforce more generally, the age profile of teachers together with the general ageing population suggests that it is likely that Tasmania will have fewer teachers by 2035 than it has today.

Redefining educational success: pathways, outcomes, and measures

Education leads to better economic and social opportunities for individuals and provides broader societal and economic benefits for communities. No matter what career and life choices young people want to have, they will not be able to pursue them without being literate and numerate to a standard that enables them to participate fully.

The absence of a definition of educational success in Tasmania has meant that the primary focus of success has remained on the traditional concepts of 'formal attainment' in schools. Reporting of Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) attainment does not include attainment achieved outside of schools in other forms of education and training, such as Vocational Education and Training (VET) with a Registered Training Organisation. By only including enrolled students, this reporting excludes a cohort of young people who are legitimately engaged in another option allowed for under Tasmanian legislation but who are not enrolled in a Tasmanian school.

As a result, many students cannot see themselves represented in the current narrative of success surrounding education and training. A well-rounded education system recognises diverse student pathways. For students to make informed choices, it's important that all pathways are presented and valued equally.

The Review heard young people generally describe success as a range of achievements and attributes that they hoped to have, including functional life and social skills, having choice for future pathways, personal development, achieving personal goals, and being contributing members of society.

Currently attaining a TCE or VET qualification enables young people to demonstrate they have the skills to participate in employment and further education and training. The Review consistently heard that there is a need for a way to capture and certify broader student capabilities. Examples of such approaches are emerging across Australia.

Engagement and support for students and families

Engagement is the extent to which students identify with and value schooling outcomes and participate in academic and non-academic school activities. Student engagement thrives when students are empowered as active partners in their learning. The Review saw Tasmanian schools that were amplifying the views and voices of their students by encouraging collaborative decision-making in school planning. It is important to note that these schools used evidence-based approaches to teaching and were clear about lesson design and the sequence of the curriculum content.

Nationally, data such as lower attendance rates, indicate that disengagement often starts in the later years of primary school. This is most evident from the high school

years. Effective wrap-around supports during transitions can significantly impact students' confidence, motivation, and overall success. The high school years are when most students begin to consider their future careers, education pathways, and life goals. The Review consistently heard from students the need for more and earlier career education and career counselling. This helps contextualise their learning to keep students engaged and motivated to achieve.

There is a natural change in the intensity of direct family involvement in school as students age and gain a level of independence over their learning. This means there is no one-size-fits-all approach to good family engagement, but sustaining an appropriate level of family engagement throughout all stages of education is important for maintaining support for students.

The Review saw examples of schools focusing on creating inclusive environments, supporting families to feel safe, welcomed, and be valued partners in their children's education. These schools pointed to positive parent satisfaction that indicated strong family engagement and a sense of belonging to the school community for students and their families. This can be amplified by knowing and valuing the capabilities and experiences of families that can contribute to and enrich the school community.

Supporting educators

The greatest in-school influence on student progress and achievement is quality teaching. The Review heard amazing stories about educators who change young people's lives and go above and beyond every day. The Review heard from many Tasmanian educators how highly rewarding teaching is. Elevating the value of teaching remains vital.

Educators and school leaders overwhelmingly told the Review about the value of professional development that is focussed on teaching practice. The Review noted that professional associations and research organisations offer and facilitate professional learning.

There are national initiatives to create faster and employment-based pathways for mid-career professionals wanting to become teachers, which have the potential to be scaled in Tasmania. There are opportunities for Tasmania's education sector and the University of Tasmania to work more closely together to ensure that undergraduate teacher training best prepares tomorrow's teachers.

Improving attraction and retention of teachers can be aided by creating career pathways and recognising middle leaders and expert teachers.

Just as student wellbeing is critical to learner outcomes, so too is the wellbeing of educators. The Review heard that the impact of trauma on educator wellbeing is an issue that requires differentiated support, particularly in schools that have large cohorts of students with trauma experience.

Teacher workload remains a key issue and is a national focus already being subject to scrutiny and review. This requires systems to minimise their administrative requirements on schools and ensure that the right role within the school is responsible for completing non-teaching tasks. Explicit requirements to limit and/or offset workload on school leaders and educators should be explored.

The current growth in Edtech and AI has the opportunity to assist teachers and learners. Careful consideration and curation of technology solutions will be essential to mitigate risks in relation to security, accuracy and appropriateness of context.

Rethinking service delivery

Tasmania is a small state with finite resources. There will need to be different, place-based approaches to ensuring that quality teaching can be sustained for all Tasmanian students and the communities in which they live.

The Review heard that Tasmania could further leverage resources from other jurisdictions, systems, and non-government organisations. Not only would such action mitigate a quality and sustainability risk, but it would free up system resources that could be redirected to tasks that directly support schools, to deepen their capacity.

Across Tasmania, the Review saw various partnership models that support schools in their immediate and broader community. Some schools told the Review that they would be collectively stronger and better able to meet student learning needs if they were to formally operate as one school across several campuses. 'Multi-School Organisations' (MSOs) are defined as strong 'families' of schools, bound together through a united executive leadership that is accountable for students' results.

A one-size-fits-all model or state-wide mandate is unlikely to be the solution on how best to resource and provide learning opportunities to students. Any new models trialled in Tasmania should be done in partnership with the local communities.

Leveraging the capabilities and expertise of the local community and other external partners can further strengthen the support for schools. These relationships provide industry insights and resources, support curriculum enhancement and instructional methods.

The Review was impressed by the Child and Family Learning Centre (CFLC) model that places children and families at the centre. CFLCs provide access to a range of integrated services and wrap around supports for children and families. In this model, Centre Coordinators lead the coordinated delivery of programs and services. To reduce the administrative burden on schools and educators, the Review considers applying a role similar to the CFLC Coordinator in the school context. Coordination of services required to support young people and families must be in the pursuit of maximising their learning and not disrupt their learning time.



Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Effective implementation and monitoring of new initiatives and programs in schools are critical to maximising educational outcomes for all students. There must be a clear cadence of change from the boardroom to the classroom. Factors such as demographics, staffing, school readiness and resourcing influence how schools adopt new practices. Systems can support schools to assess the fit and feasibility of changes, including timelines and priorities, to ensure credibility, buy-in and, ultimately, success.

The Review saw impactful examples of structured change management supporting implementation of initiatives. Key to these examples was partnering with organisations and individuals that brought expert knowledge, skills and capability; de-implementation of work not aligned with priorities; and monitoring and evaluation.

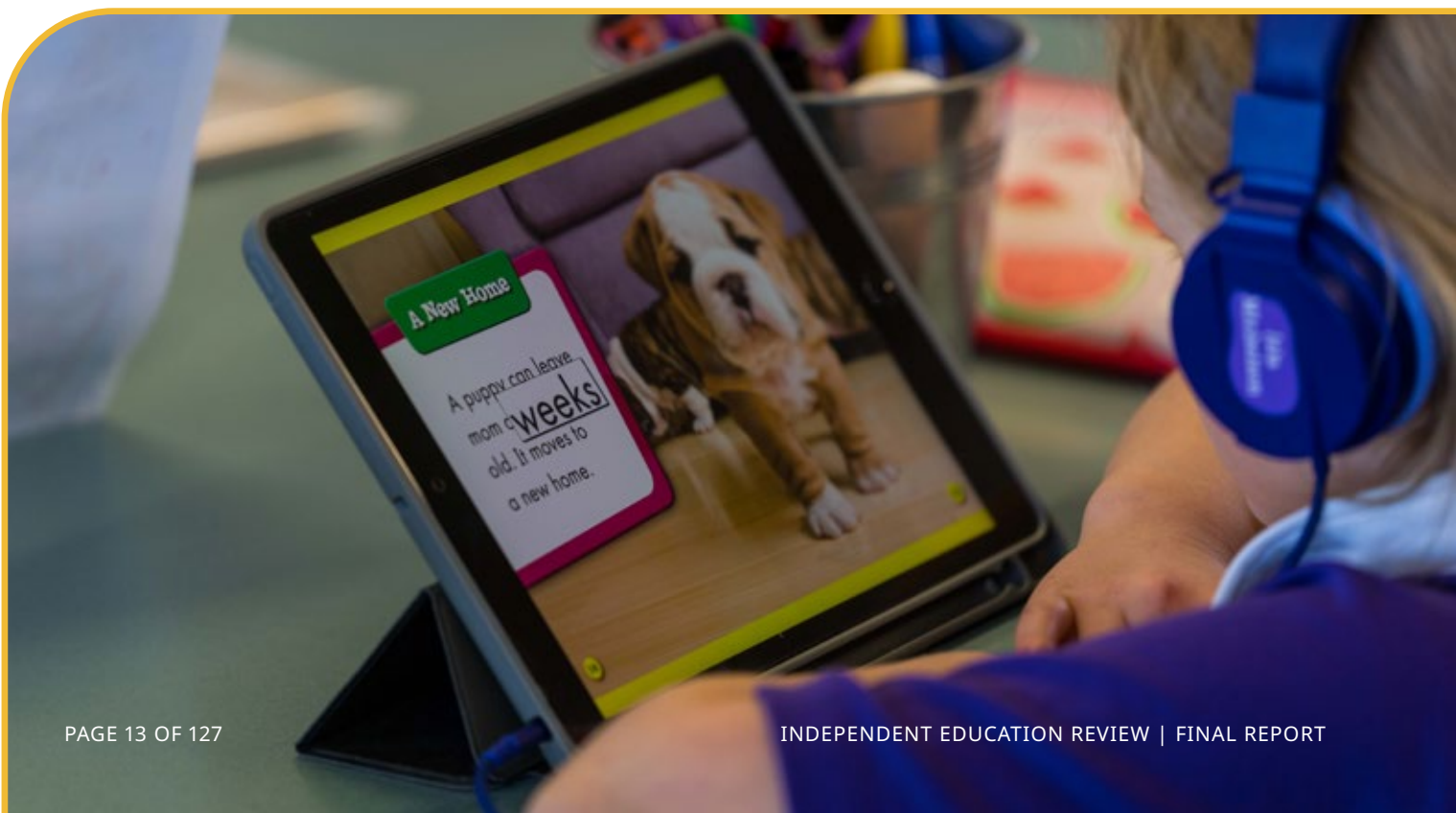
Stay the course on literacy

There is substantial work underway to improve literacy in Tasmania. Literacy is foundational to all other learning. Research highlights that evidence-based teaching practices, grounded in the cognitive science behind how students learn benefits all students.

The Review visited a number of schools which have been implementing structured literacy instruction for some time, and acknowledges that across the systems, schools were at different stages of their implementation journey.

The Review noted that common diagnostic tools are being adopted by schools and systems across Tasmania, with schools reporting that they were already seeing growth in student-level reading and spelling data.

There are lessons to be learnt from the implementation of past reforms and initiatives. Sustaining focus, implementation support and resources over the longer term on Lifting Literacy is important to the lives of individuals and Tasmania's overall future.



2.1 Summary of Recommendations and Findings

Redefining educational success: pathways, outcomes, and measures

RECOMMENDATION

- R1** More work needs to be done to improve the narrative and reporting underpinning success to increase student and family understanding around the value proposition of education.

FINDINGS

- F1** There is an opportunity to strengthen Tasmanians' understanding of the importance of participating in the formal years of education and training.
- F2** The Tasmanian Advisory Council for Education should consider the work of other states and territories, when progressing the conversations and stakeholder input on defining educational success for Tasmanians.
- F3** Tasmania's reporting of outcomes needs to mature and focus on young people's achievements regardless of their learning setting.
- F4** Tasmanians' idea of success is broad and varied. Recognising achievements, including academic, social, or vocational skills builds student pride and encourages continued effort and engagement. This ongoing celebration of diverse forms of success reinforces the idea that education is not a one-size-fits-all journey but a personalised pathway to a fulfilling future.
- F5** Once a clear definition of success has been agreed in the Tasmanian context, it is crucial that the measures and certifications align and strengthen this message.
- F6** Personal pathways should be valued and should deliver a high quality, inclusive and comprehensive education with a universal level of literacy and numeracy.
- F7** As an education sector, to strengthen the public narrative of success, Tasmania should:
- ▶ be unrelentingly focussed on its improvement journey;
 - ▶ have clear indicators/measures that provide evidence of whether initiatives being implemented have impact; and
 - ▶ have contemporary, comparable and comprehensive certification that captures the multiple pathways available.
- F8** The Tasmanian Certificate of Education is a recognised certificate and metric, however, on its own is insufficient and incomplete recognition of the range of attainment.

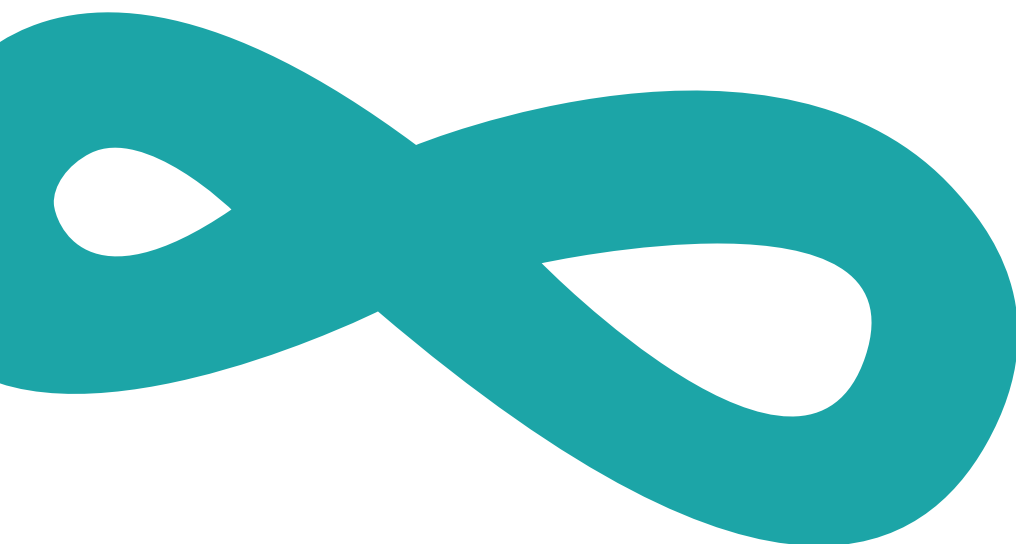
Engagement and support for students and families

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R2** Strengthen students as partners in their learning for school improvement.
-
- R3** Harness the power of family and community knowledge through engagement to improve student outcomes.
-

FINDINGS

- F9** Schools that have robust models that amplify students as partners in their learning have increased engagement.
-
- F10** The Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework offers an approach that ensures all students receive effective, evidence-based teaching, and some students can gain differentiated, targeted instruction according to their needs.
-
- F11** Continuity of curriculum and consistent teaching practices are crucial to support student engagement across key transition points.
-
- F12** More and earlier information should be offered about pathways, courses, career, and learning options that support students' diverse goals and interests.
-
- F13** School culture is a critical foundation for learning success. Schools that focus on actions that make school a place where students have their growth and achievements regularly celebrated, make for a more positive learning environment.
-
- F14** Schools that create inclusive environments where families feel welcomed, valued and engaged build the collective capacity to support students' learning.
-



Supporting educators

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R4** Consider funding Professional Associations to enable them to deliver discipline-specific professional learning.
-
- R5** Strengthen University of Tasmania and sectors collaboration to ensure Initial Teacher Education is preparing teachers for all aspects of the role.
-
- R6** Consider broadening support, modelled on programs available to front line staff in other industries (e.g. Emergency Services, Health), for educators working in complex settings, to maintain and maximise education staff health and wellbeing.
-
- R7** Consider partnering with other organisations and education jurisdictions to inform Tasmania’s position on expanding the safe and effective use of digital teaching and learning tools, especially to improve outcomes for disadvantaged and special needs students, through:
- ▶ professional learning opportunities and preservice teacher education; and
 - ▶ research into what works best in using education technology learning applications, including working with disadvantaged schools to test and showcase effective integration.
-

FINDINGS

- F15** Explicit mentoring and peer observation opportunities that are structured and resourced, including time to participate, can aid in ensuring that professional learning and mentoring is not foregone due to other workload pressures.
-
- F16** The Tasmanian Education System could leverage the expertise of professional associations to support professional development for discipline-specific learning.
-
- F17** The Tasmanian Education System could strengthen how it works with tertiary providers, particularly the University of Tasmania, to ensure that early career teachers have the knowledge, skills and capabilities so they are well prepared for all aspects of the classroom.
-
- F18** The Tasmanian Education System can better leverage national and international work, to strengthen the support for and retention of Tasmania’s education workforce, as well as improve attraction.
-
- F19** Schools, particularly those that deal with significant trauma, should have access to wellbeing and support services beyond Employee Assistance Programs and more akin to those available to frontline emergency services staff.
-
- F20** Explicit requirements to limit and/or offset workload on school leaders and educators should be explored.
-
- F21** The use of education technology and Artificial Intelligence has the potential to significantly support educators, including reducing their workload, but there are also risks that require careful consideration when adopting and using these tools.

Rethinking service delivery

RECOMMENDATION

- R8** Trial a limited number of models where access to resources and services can be maximised to better support learning and the work of schools.

FINDINGS

- F22** The Tasmanian Education System has the opportunity to maximise its use of resources by better leveraging the expertise of other jurisdictions and external organisations.
- F23** There is merit in trialling Multi-School Organisations in schools and communities that are interested in, and will be supported with, this approach.
- F24** Accountability for student outcomes is a collective responsibility, and roles should be clearly defined. The sharing of relevant data and information across schools to inform the improvement agenda needs to be strengthened.
- F25** The Tasmanian Education System could explore further models that assist schools to better leverage external partners to support student needs, maximise opportunities and experiences to improve engagement and learning.
- F26** The role of service coordinator in schools could be explored to ensure educators can focus on teaching and learning as a priority.

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R9** The Tasmanian Education System should create a clear cadence for change and build clear lines of accountability through a focus on what matters most: what is being taught and how it is being taught.
-
- R10** As a small jurisdiction and in the context of existing workforce capacity, Tasmania should intentionally and systematically source the most appropriate evidence-based support and resources to enhance implementation and de-implementation.
-
- R11** Adequately planned and resourced implementation, along with monitoring of progress and evaluation of impact, is required to drive, refine, sustain and embed practice.
-

FINDINGS

- F27** Implementation frameworks should allow for differentiation in implementation that enables schools to tailor to their context.
-
- F28** To be highly effective, the Tasmanian Education System should focus and resource fewer, evidence-based, strategically aligned priorities.
-
- F29** A structured change management approach should underpin all initiatives to ensure successful outcomes.
-
- F30** The Tasmanian Education System should continue to partner with subject matter experts to support the development, delivery and capability building underpinning new initiatives.
-

Stay the course on Lifting Literacy

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R12** Stay the course on the Lifting Literacy initiative as the Review witnessed several indicators of early impact.
-
- R13** Over the next 10 years, ensure that the existing and future workforce is equipped with the knowledge, skills and resources to ensure the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy are taught across all phases of learning and subject disciplines.
-
- R14** The advice from the Lifting Literacy Outcomes Monitoring Group, along with system and school monitoring, needs to inform the pace of implementation of other major state-wide initiatives to ensure there is a sound evidence-base guiding the direction, resourcing, and implementation.
-

FINDINGS

- F31** A laser like focus on what matters most helps teachers and students focus on where to direct their energy.
-
- F32** Embracing the evidence on the best ways to teach and the best ways to learn at a class, school, and system level is the first crucial step. The real challenge lies in implementation and monitoring.
-
- F33** Early school-based feedback indicates evidence-based structured (systematic and explicit) literacy teaching is supporting students' growth and progress.
-
- F34** The full impact of a large-scale system-wide approach to the teaching of literacy on student learning outcomes will take time to see.
-
- F35** Starting points vary between schools and implementation needs to account for these differences. Schools and educators need wrap-around systemic support, that is tailored to their context so they can effectively deliver literacy instruction.
-
- F36** Before policy makers consider undertaking a systemic approach for numeracy, the Lifting Literacy initiative should become truly embedded with sustained improved outcomes evident over time. That said, there is no reason why smaller scale evidence-based initiatives at the school-level cannot be supported for those schools that are ready.
-

Glossary

3

TERM	DEFINITION
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACE	(Tasmanian) Advisory Council for Education
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AERO	Australian Education Research Organisation
AEU	Australian Education Union (Tasmania)
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teachers and School Leaders
Approved Learning Program	Under the <i>Education Act 2016</i> , an Approved Learning Program means an ‘appropriate course of education or training’ delivered by a provider in accordance with the specified program and which represents a full-time program load – or a combination of learning program options that add up to the equivalent of a full-time program load – at a school/college, university, registered training organisation or with an employer.
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
ATWD	Australian Teacher Workforce Data
BFSA	(The) Better and Fairer Schools Agreement The BFSA is a joint agreement between the Commonwealth, states and territories that aims to improve education outcomes for all Australian students and build on the capability and capacity of the education workforce. It outlines a set of reforms in areas where national collaboration will have the greatest impact on driving improved student outcomes.
CET	Catholic Education Tasmania
CFLC	Child and Family Learning Centre(s)
DECYP	Department for Education, Children and Young People
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
Edtech	Education Technology

TERM	DEFINITION
Education Act	<i>Education Act 2016 (Tas)</i>
Families	Inclusive of parents, guardians, and carers
GSP	Gross State Product
HALT	Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers certification
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
IST	Independent Schools Tasmania
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LGA	Local Government Area
MSO	Multi School Organisation(s)
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
NEAT	Network of Education Associations of Tasmania
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NT	Northern Territory
NTWAP	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Parents	Includes carers and guardians
PLT	Professional Learning Team(s)
the Review	Independent Review of Education in Tasmania
RTO	Registered Training Organisation(s)
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
SEA	Socio-economic Advantage
SEW	Survey of Education and Work
TASC	Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification
TASSO	Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education
TCEA	Tasmanian Certificate of Educational Achievement
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRB	Teachers Registration Board (Tasmania)
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Introduction

4

4.1 About the Review

On 24 June 2024, the Minister for Education, The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC, announced an Independent Review into the Tasmanian Education System (the Review). Ms Vicki Baylis (the Reviewer) was appointed to lead the Review. On 16 August 2024, Minister Palmer released the Terms of Reference for the Review, which required the Review to provide a Report and recommendations to Government in December 2024.

The scope of the Review included the government and non-government school sectors with a focus on Kindergarten to Year 12.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) asked the Review to focus on five themes:

1 Defining educational success

We need to ensure that our education system has clearly agreed objectives that are transparently reported. What does success look like after the formal years of schooling in the Tasmanian context and how do we better encourage our young people to aspire to achieve?

2 Strengthening engagement and supports for all learners at all stages of their education

How can we collectively support Tasmanian learners to get the most out of their entire education experience and ensure all students reach their potential?

3 Outcomes at the conclusion of the formal years of schooling

Noting the specific challenges that emerge as young people progress through schooling; how can we improve attendance, retention, attainment and student outcomes to better support choice of learning and career pathways?

4 Support for our teaching workforce

How do we attract, support and develop teachers and school leaders to be effective and successful practitioners who can confidently deliver high quality, evidence-based teaching that meets the needs of students at all levels?

5 Accountability for improved outcomes

How do we ensure that policy initiatives are implemented, and resources are used to improve learning outcomes?

The Terms of Reference also set out the Government's objectives over the next decade for the Review, these are for a Tasmanian School System that:

- ▶ implements evidence-based whole of school practices and pedagogy that leads to improved student educational outcomes and behaviour;
- ▶ delivers high quality teaching that is evidence-based and meets the needs of students at all levels;
- ▶ effectively utilises resources to improve student outcomes and attract and retain a high quality workforce;

- ▶ contributes to the State's productivity by supporting a highly skilled local workforce to assist local businesses and industry to grow and compete; and
- ▶ is accountable for improved student outcomes, including in remote and rural areas.

4.2 About the Reviewer

Vicki Baylis started her career as a classroom teacher and school principal in North Queensland. She then became an Executive Director within the Queensland Department of Education, responsible for all government schools in the North Queensland Region.

In 2010, Vicki transitioned to the Northern Territory Department of Education, where from 2016 she was Chief Executive until early 2020.

Vicki has also worked on a range of national initiatives and currently serves as Board Chair of Education Services Australia. Her expertise includes the practical and pragmatic implementation of evidence-based approaches at scale.

Vicki was appointed to lead the Review given her wealth of experience in the Australian context, which enables her to provide an independent perspective for Tasmania. Vicki was supported by a small secretariat during the course of the Review.

4.3 Multipartisan support for reform

The ToR state that the Review be undertaken to provide advice to the Tasmanian Government on evidence-based, implementable and impactful reforms that will ensure Tasmania's Education System delivers on the Review's objectives over the next decade.

The Review considers that for any reforms to be implementable, they need to have sustained bipartisan support. The Review consistently heard from educators and stakeholders that too often new initiatives are introduced which replace old ones before they have a chance to improve student outcomes. Given the time it takes for change to become embedded practice, initiatives need long term commitment and appropriate change management. This requires a thorough design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation strategy underpinning them. Regardless of who forms Government over the next decade, bipartisan support will be important.

Bipartisan support is achievable. In December 2019, all Australian Education Ministers signed up to the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration. Ministers from both sides of politics across state and territory governments and the Australian Government agreed to a vision and goals for education and for young Australians (Australian Government, 2019).

The Declaration's vision *'is for a world class education system that encourages and supports every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they may face.'* Goal 2 of the Declaration is *'All young Australians become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed members of the community'* (Australian Government, 2019).

The Declaration, its vision and goals, can be a guiding light for bipartisan support for Tasmania's Education System over the next decade and beyond.

4.4 Reading the Report

The Report has an Executive Summary which summarises the Review's findings and recommendations. It is designed so that it can also be read as a succinct, standalone document.

The Report is structured so that readers are provided with:

- ▶ an understanding of the approach the Review has undertaken;
- ▶ context regarding Tasmania's education system now and over the next decade; and
- ▶ main chapters that set out the Review's articulation of the issues it examined and the key findings and recommendations.

Issues impacting student outcomes are varied and integrated. While the ToR are specific, the inputs received by the Review mean that some of the discussions were broader and woven throughout this Report. The Review has organised its chapters in a manner that reflects how it has considered what has been heard through consultation and found in the evidence. Findings and recommendations made as part of the Review should be considered sector wide and sector blind, unless explicitly stated.



Approach to the Review

5

The Report is not intended to represent a comprehensive, deep dive into each of the themes outlined in the ToR. Instead, it outlines a summary of key themes and provides findings and recommendations for Government and the Tasmanian Education System to consider.

The Review also acknowledges that this is not the first review conducted in the Tasmanian education sector in recent years. As such, the findings of relevant reviews such as the 2016 Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) *Review of Years 9 to 12 Tasmania*, and the 2023 Lifting Literacy Advisory Panel's *Final Report to Government*, have been considered in developing the Report.

The decision was made by the Review to use only publicly accessible and comparable data across the three educational sectors (Catholic, independent and government). While the Review was provided with limited, unpublished data to assist its inquiries, these data were not relied upon to underpin recommendations and findings.

The Review also noted that while the Review was underway,

- ▶ the Tasmanian Youth Jobs Strategy was released;
- ▶ Tasmania signed its Bilateral Agreement under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (BFSA); and
- ▶ the Parliamentary Inquiry into *Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian schools* was conducted.

5.1 Communication strategy

All Tasmanians were encouraged to have their say on the future of Tasmania's Education System. To achieve this, a comprehensive communication strategy was developed to support the activities of the Review.

This strategy was designed to resonate with a diverse group of Tasmanians, encompassing all educational sectors and age groups, particularly focusing on those involved in the education and development of children and young people.

To achieve this, the Review leveraged print, radio, social media and distribution of posters to advertise public consultation activities undertaken by the Review.

5.2 Consultation and engagement

Consultation supporting the Review was undertaken in three key stages.

- ▶ Initial consultation with key stakeholders to support advice to the Minister for Education on the development of the Review's ToR. This stage did not include consultation with children and young people.
- ▶ The second phase saw the Review undertake a desktop analysis of existing publicly available data, including Tasmania's demographic profile, socio-economic characteristics, and learnings from other jurisdictions.
- ▶ Finally, the Review commenced public consultation activities that saw a consultation paper and surveys designed to engage the broader Tasmanian community, families, students, professional representative organisations and peak bodies. Further to this, the Review conducted:
 - over 80 semi-structured interviews with educational sectors, leaders in government and non-government agencies, academics, and identified stakeholders;
 - 32 face-to-face visits to 29 schools, two Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLC) and one Trade Training Centre across Tasmania;
 - seven online meetings with schools; and
 - four online forums with teachers and support staff, Principals and school leadership teams, school association members and students, with 73 participants attending across the four sessions. Appendix A lists each of the schools and community groups consulted as part of the Reviews visit schedule.

Consultation activities were supported by the Review's public website ier.tas.gov.au where a list of non-confidential submissions responding to the public consultation paper can be found.

5.2.1 Review of surveys and submissions

In response to the public consultation activities, the Review received the following:

- ▶ 96 submissions responding to the public consultation paper, 80 of which can be found at ier.tas.gov.au, and 16 were confidential. See Appendix B for a complete list of publicly available submissions;
- ▶ 927 responses to the educator, family and Tasmanian community survey; and
- ▶ 462 responses to the student survey. Appendix C provides the list of questions included in each of the surveys. Survey results can be found on ier.tas.gov.au

The Review engaged KPMG to assist in developing and delivering the Review surveys, and to synthesise themes from both survey and submission responses received.

The Review used the synthesis as one evidence point alongside of the research and consultation input it received to form its findings and recommendations. A range of references and quotes from surveys and submissions are used throughout the Report to highlight issues the Review heard.

5.3 Limitations

5.3.1 Timeframe from announcement to delivery

The Review has been conducted within a short time frame. The Review secretariat was established in the week of 15 July 2024 and the ToR were made publicly available on 16 August 2024. This provided the Review 18 weeks from the issuing of the ToR to delivery of the Final Report on 20 December 2024.

Consultations, interviews and surveys were conducted at the end of Term 3 and the beginning of Term 4. This saw an overlap with the Term 3 school holiday period in Tasmania.

A timeline of Review activities can be found in Appendix D.

5.3.2 The representativeness of stakeholders in consultation processes

The Review made every effort to engage as many stakeholders from across education and learning providers, academia, non-profit organisations and interested individuals as possible. Given the timeframe, consultation with every school in Tasmania was not feasible.

The Review acknowledges and recognises that education needs to understand and accommodate the needs of specific demographic groups, including but not limited to Aboriginal students; students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; home educated students, students in out-of-home care, young carers, and students from the LGBTIQ+ community. Due to the timeframes of the Review, there was no capacity to examine specific issues, recognising that student need is varied and complex.

The Review also acknowledges that a number of organisations and individuals took the opportunity to advocate for a cause or initiatives that were considered outside of the ToR. The Review, however, appreciated all of the ideas and feedback received. All were important to hear.

5.3.3 Out of scope of the Review

The following topics were considered out of scope for the Review:

- ▶ educator remuneration;
- ▶ the quantum and allocation of school funding;
- ▶ the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector; and
- ▶ tertiary and vocational options after Year 12.



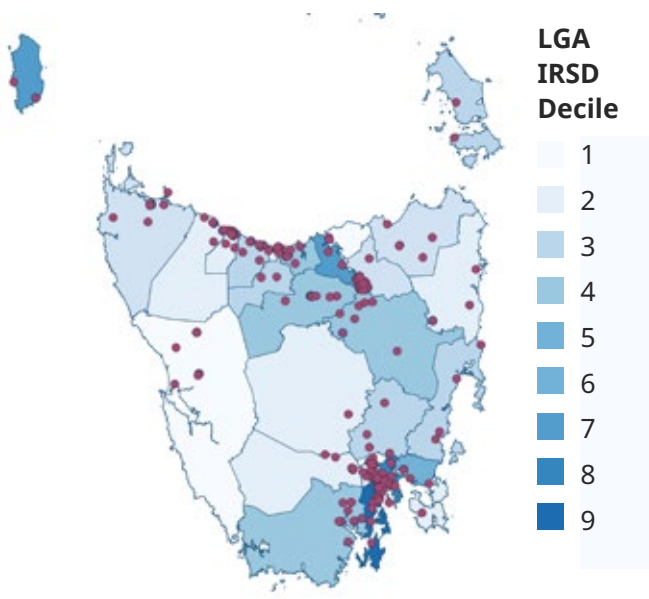
Snapshot of education in Tasmania

6

This chapter presents a snapshot of key facts about Tasmanian schools and students, to provide context for the Report’s main chapters.

Tasmania has 261 schools across the State. This is made up of 189 government schools, 38 Catholic schools and 34 independent schools. The below map shows the distribution of schools by Local Government Area (LGA) as well as each LGA’s level of disadvantage (as measured by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)’s Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) – the lower the number/lighter shading indicates relatively greater disadvantage).

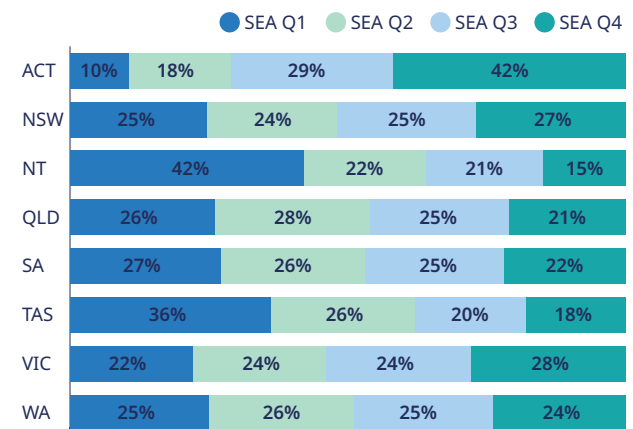
Figure 1: Distribution of schools in Tasmania, with heatmap of IRSD by LGA



Source: ABS IRSD ACARA Schools List

Tasmania has a higher proportion of students in lower socio-economic status quartiles than most of the country – 62 per cent in the lowest quartiles 1 and 2 as measured by the Index for Socio-economic Advantage (SEA), which is a different measure than the IRSD. Tasmania has large concentrations of disadvantaged communities and closely resembles the Northern Territory in terms of the total number of students in the lowest 2 quartiles.

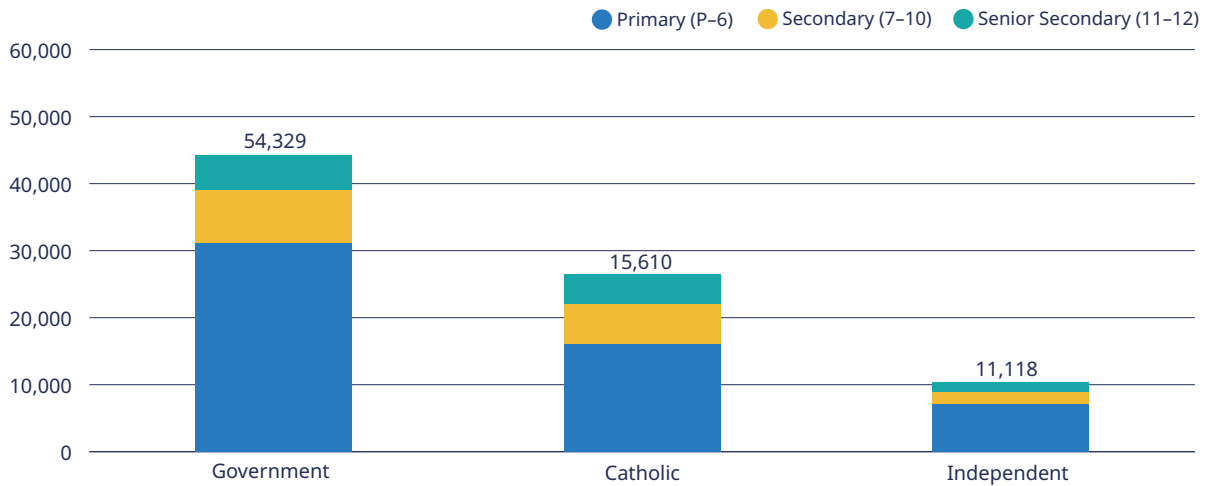
Figure 2: Distribution of students in SEA quartiles, by state



Source: My School, School Profile, 2022: ACARA – Data Access Program

In 2023, there were 81,057 students enrolled in Tasmania. About 70 per cent of primary school students are enrolled in the government sector. This decreases to about 60 per cent in the secondary years (7-10) but increases to about 70 per cent again in the senior secondary years (11 and 12).

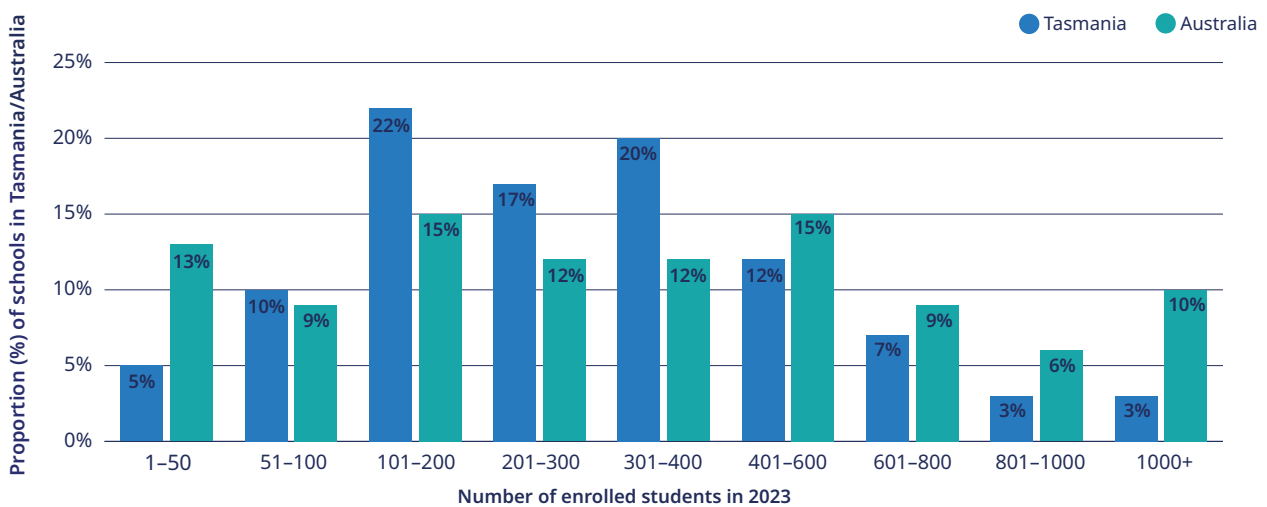
Figure 3: Number of enrolments by sector and school type (2023)



Source: ACARA Student numbers 2023

As profiled in the figure below, the majority (approximately 60 per cent) of Tasmanian schools have between 100 and 400 enrolments, while 25 per cent have greater than 400 enrolments. By comparison, only about 40 per cent of Australian schools have between 100-400 enrolments, and approximately another 40 per cent of Australian schools having greater than 400 enrolments.

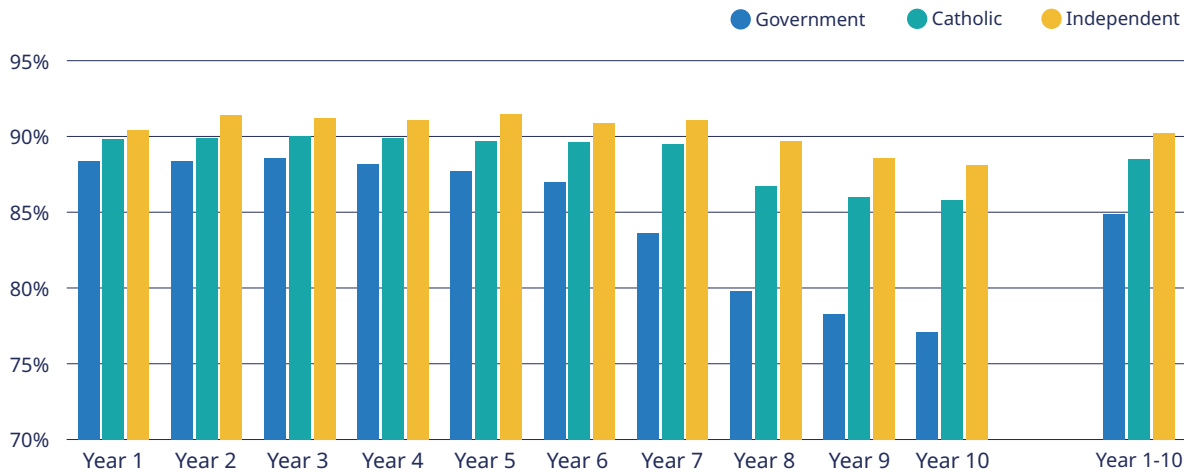
Figure 4: Proportion of schools in Tasmania and Australia by enrolment size (2023)



Source: ACARA Schools List (2023)

The average attendance rate of Year 1-10 students in Tasmania was 86.4 per cent in 2023. Attendance rates have an observable downward trend in later year levels of schooling. Similar decreases can be observed across all Australian states. There is no national or sector wide reporting of attendance rates for years 11 and 12, including Tasmania's.

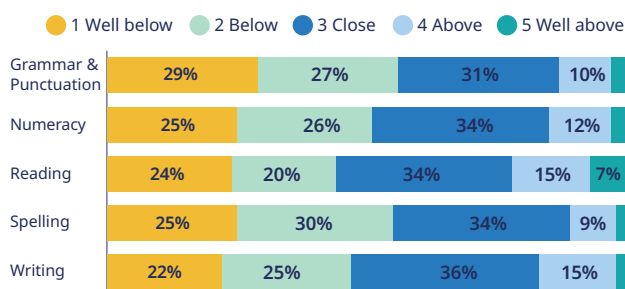
Figure 5: Tasmanian 2023 Attendance Rates – by Year Level and school sector



Source: ACARA National Report on Schooling – attendance (2023)

An analysis of individual Tasmanian schools' results in 2024 from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA) *My School* website shows a considerable proportion of schools that perform below or well below average across all five NAPLAN test domains, when compared to Australia as a whole, using the comparison categories used in *MySchool*.

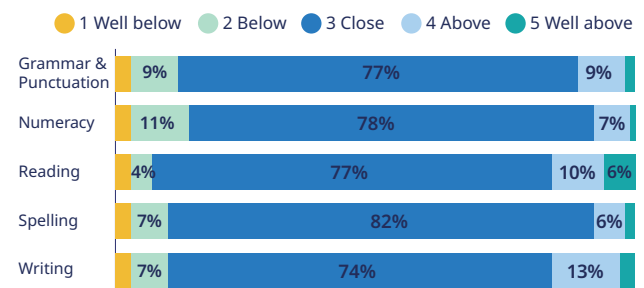
Figure 6: Proportion of Tasmanian NAPLAN school means compared to average of Australian students, by NAPLAN domain (2024)



Source: Analysis of data from *My School*, NAPLAN Profile, 2024

When individual Tasmanian schools' NAPLAN results are compared to Australian schools which have similar student backgrounds, three quarters or more are performing close to schools of a similar profile around Australia.

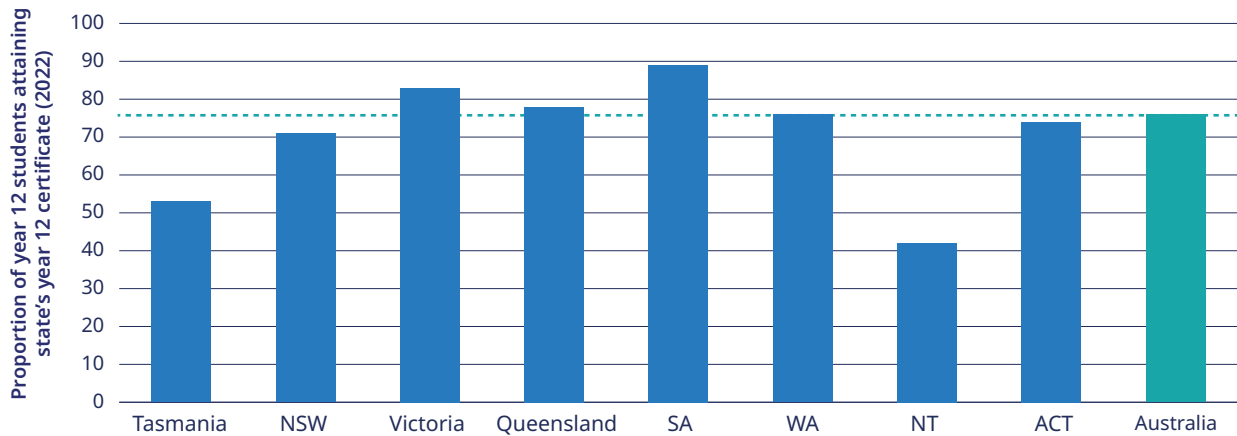
Figure 7: Proportion of Tasmanian NAPLAN school means compared to students with similar background



Source: Analysis of data from *My School*, NAPLAN Profile, 2024

Tasmania’s Year 12 completion rate is reported as the attainment of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE). There are no reliable national comparisons because assessment, reporting and criteria requirements for obtaining a Year 12 certificate differ by jurisdiction. As one example, some states include those students completing further study in technical institutes, while others do not. The graph below shows the rates of completion of each state and territories’ Year 12 certificate in 2022 (the latest publicly available data).

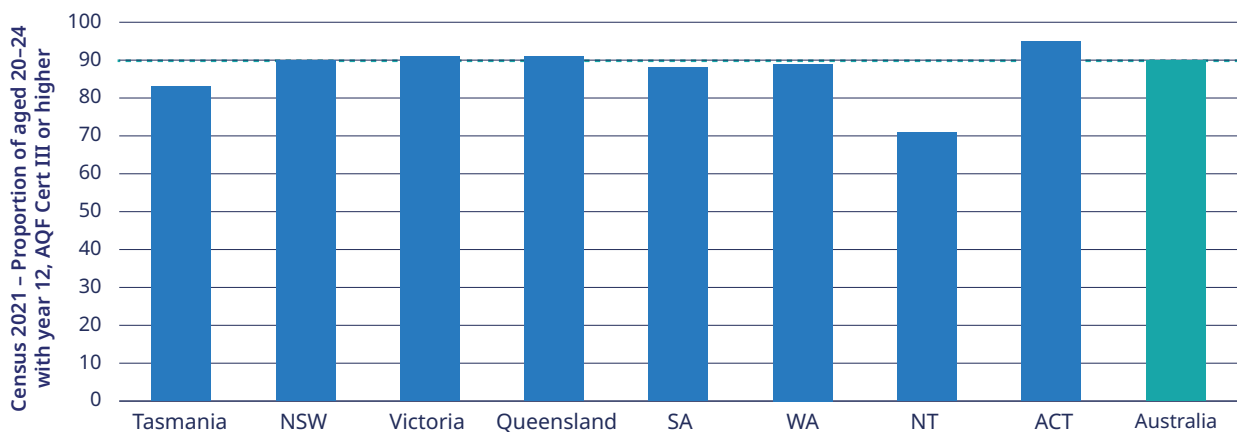
Figure 8: 2022 Year 12 certification rates by state



Source: ACARA National Report on Schooling – Year 12 certification rates (2022)

Highest levels of education as reported in the national Census provide a consistent way of looking at equivalent completion rates across jurisdictions. The figure below profiles the proportion of those aged 20-24 in the 2021 Census whose reported highest level of educational achievement was Year 12, Certificate III (which are the ‘benchmarks’ in Tasmanian legislation) or higher. Using the 20-24 year cohort rather than school aged cohorts allows for differences in school finishing ages across states and territories.

Figure 9: 2021 Census Highest Education Achievement – Year 12 or Cert III or higher by state



Source: ACARA key performance measures for schooling in Australia 7(b) 2021 – Census of Population and Housing

Demographic change over the next decade

7

Tasmania faces challenges and opportunities over the next decade due to its projected population change. This has significant implications for education provision. From analysis of available data, the Review notes that the projection is for reducing numbers of students over the next decade. This decline will differ across Tasmania, with smaller regional areas projected to be most impacted. Although there are no readily available projections of forecast teacher numbers, the age profile of current teachers suggests the potential for fewer teachers over the next decade.

Submissions to the Review highlighted key demographic trends facing Tasmania and associated issues, particularly for education and Tasmania's future workforce needs (Denny, 2024). The Review notes that Tasmania is planning how it will manage population change for society and the economy's future (Tasmanian Department of State Growth, 2024). Tasmania's Education System likewise needs to prepare for the future. Making sure education meets the needs of individuals and for Tasmania as a whole, particularly in the context of demographic challenges, will be essential.

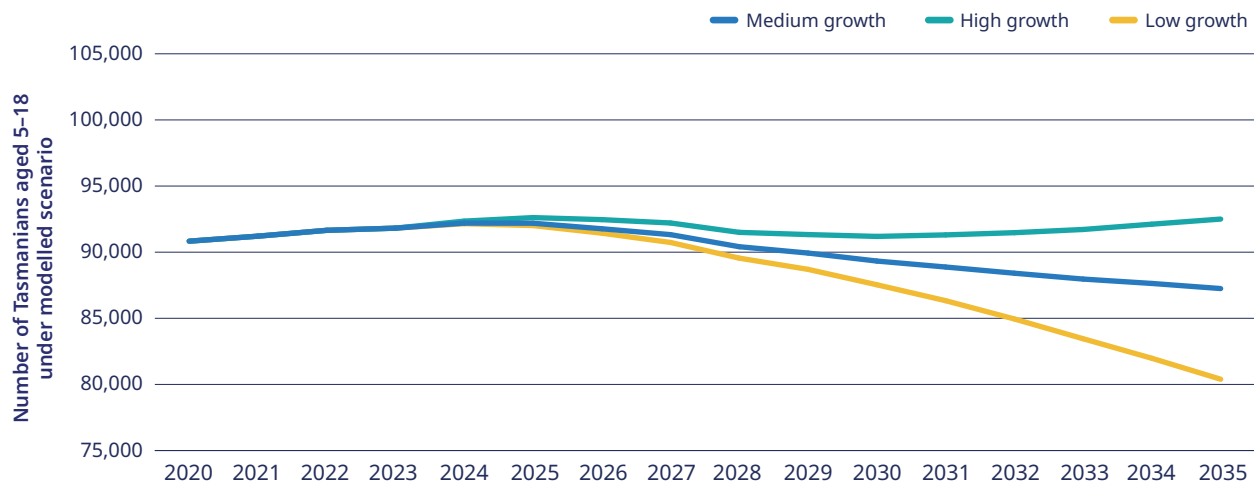
7.1 Tasmania's projected student population in 2035

The Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance (Treasury) produces population projections following the release of ABS Census data. Treasury's latest release in May 2024 provides population projections from 2023 to 2053, including down to a LGA level (Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance, 2024). These projections profile three modelled scenarios – a high, medium and low growth scenario, and are presented by age.

Tasmania's population has been ageing over recent decades, and under all the modelled projection scenarios created by Treasury, the State's population is projected to continue ageing. The number of school-aged children and young people is also projected to continue to decline (Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance, 2024).

The following figure provides a summary of Treasury's projections for school aged children and young people between the ages of 5 and 18 under Treasury's three modelled scenarios.

Figure 10: Treasury Projections for school aged students, 5 to 18, in Tasmania under 3 modelled scenarios



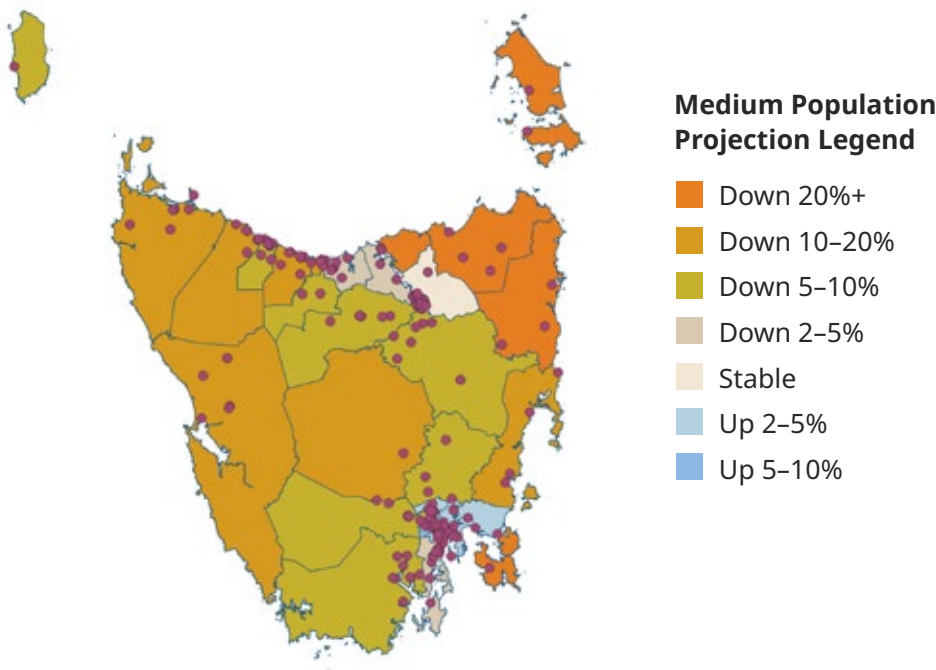
Source: Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance 2024

The projected decline in the student population is not evenly distributed across the State. In general, smaller regional areas that have already experienced a significant period of population ageing and declining numbers of children and young people, are projected to continue to do so. In some cases, the total number of children and young people in certain LGAs is already small, making the provision of services such as education challenging. Further projected decline will likely exacerbate this challenge.

The heatmap in Figure 11 shows the projected population change between 2025 and 2035 for young people under the medium growth scenario, by LGA. Also presented is the location of schools across Tasmania. A table with population projections for each LGA is included in Appendix E. Treasury’s projections at the LGA level are only in 5 year age groupings, so these data have been profiled as 5-19 (rather than 5-18 as the formal years of schooling).

No one can know with any certainty exactly how Tasmania’s population will change, and where those changes will occur. Planning for the provision of education services over the next decade should assume that there will be fewer students to be educated. This will place further pressure on the provision of education opportunities in some communities.

Figure 11: Tasmania's projected population change between 2025 and 2035 for young people aged 5-19



Source: Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance 2024, ACARA School Locations 2023.



Like much of the developed world, this will mean that the number of workers and waged taxpayers in Tasmania will shrink as a share of the total population, placing additional pressure on the supply of goods and services to older and younger Tasmanians, and greater demand for some of these services.” (such as healthcare and aged care).”

TASMANIAN DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE, 2024

The Review understands Treasury’s call for the need to build the skills and productivity of ‘our locally born workforce’ and that education is critical to this (Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance, 2024). There is much evidence to indicate that higher levels of education and training produce better economic and social outcomes for individuals, and for communities more broadly.

The Australia Institute published a report that summarises a range of national and international research that demonstrates the value of completing Year 12 compared with not doing so (Littleton, 2023). While this research focused on public schools, the Review considers its modelling to be applicable to all sectors. The Review used this modelling to estimate what the economic benefits of increasing school completion could be in Tasmania, based on the assumptions outlined in the Australia Institute Report.

The estimates indicate that, over time, even small increases in the proportion of people completing Year 12 would make an appreciable positive impact on Tasmania’s Gross State Product (GSP), and naturally its productivity. The estimates are discussed in more detail at Appendix F.

7.2 Size of the teacher workforce by 2035

The Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board (TRB) holds data on the number of registered teachers in the State, as shown in the following table.

Table 1: TRB registered teachers in Tasmania

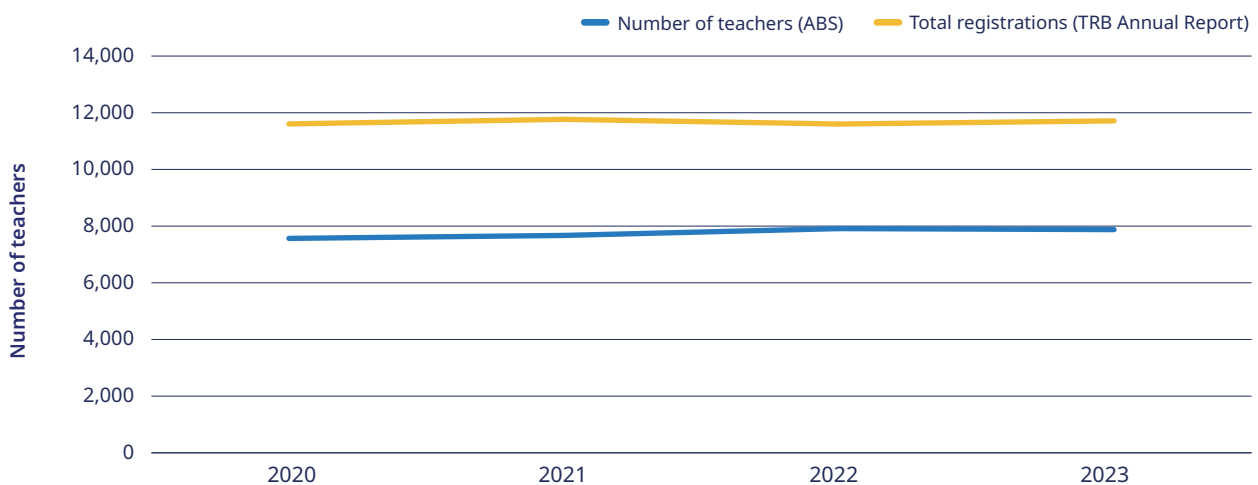
Type of Registration	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Full	7,167	7,247	7,276	7,325
Provisional	3,724	3,789	3,765	3,904
Specialist VET	646	660	491	409
Dual (spVET and Prov or Full)	69	71	70	75
Total	11,606	11,767	11,602	11,713

Source: TRB Annual Report 2023-24 (TRB (Tas), 2024)

Currently, there is no reliable way of telling how many of these registered teachers are teaching in the classroom versus performing other roles either within the education sector or outside of it. What can be done is compare the number of teachers registered

with the TRB, with the headcount of teachers practicing in class as recorded by the ABS. The figure below profiles both sets of data, although it should be noted that the two data sets use different time series (ABS is calendar year, TRB registrations are financial year).

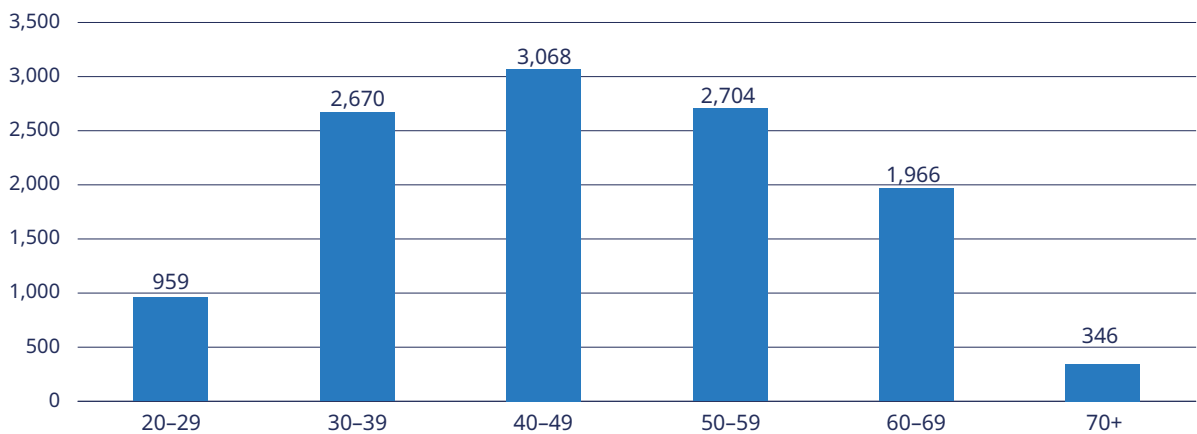
Figure 12: TRB and ABS registered teachers in Tasmania comparison



Source: TRB Annual Report 2023-24 (TRB (Tas), 2024), ABS Education Schools Table 50a (2023)

The Australian Teacher Workforce Database (ATWD) is a national database that presents teacher statistics predominately based on an annual national survey of teachers (AITSL, 2024a). Although the Review understands it is in the work program for the ATWD to produce teacher number projections, currently neither the ATWD, TRB, nor any other institution is able to produce projections for the teaching workforce. However, the TRB states that in 2024, 20 per cent of registered teachers were aged over 60 and approaching retirement age. This is five per cent higher than the proportion of teachers aged over 60 at a national level. The following chart shows registered teachers by age range (TRB Annual Report, 2023-24).

Figure 13: Number of registered teachers by age range in Tasmania, TRB



Source: TRB Annual Report 2023-24 (TRB (Tas), 2024)

Despite there being no projections available, the Review assumes based on recent trends, Tasmania’s overall demographic projections and the age profile of Tasmania’s registered teachers, that it is likely that Tasmania will have fewer teachers by 2035 than it has today. As Tasmania plans for the future, education systems will need to consider the projected decline in student numbers and the rise of emerging technologies and industry needs. However, given current teacher workforce shortages, prudent planning should aim to maximise the attraction and retention of people to the teaching profession to meet Tasmania’s needs.

Redefining educational success: pathways, outcomes, and measures

8

RECOMMENDATION

- R1** More work needs to be done to improve the narrative and reporting underpinning success to increase student and family understanding around the value proposition of education.

FINDINGS

- F1** There is an opportunity to strengthen Tasmanians' understanding of the importance of participating in the formal years of education and training.
- F2** The Tasmanian Advisory Council for Education should consider the work of other states and territories, when progressing the conversations and stakeholder input on defining educational success for Tasmanians.
- F3** Tasmania's reporting of outcomes needs to mature and focus on young people's achievements regardless of their learning setting.
- F4** Tasmanians' idea of success is broad and varied. Recognising achievements, including academic, social, or vocational skills builds student pride and encourages continued effort and engagement. This ongoing celebration of diverse forms of success reinforces the idea that education is not a one-size-fits-all journey but a personalised pathway to a fulfilling future.
- F5** Once a clear definition of success has been agreed in the Tasmanian context, it is crucial that the measures and certifications align and strengthen this message.
- F6** Personal pathways should be valued and should deliver a high quality, inclusive and comprehensive education with a universal level of literacy and numeracy.
- F7** As an education sector, to strengthen the public narrative of success, Tasmania should:
- ▶ be unrelentingly focussed on its improvement journey;
 - ▶ have clear indicators/measures that provide evidence of whether initiatives being implemented have impact; and
 - ▶ have contemporary, comparable and comprehensive certification that captures the multiple pathways available.
- F8** The Tasmanian Certificate of Education is a recognised certificate and metric, however, on its own is insufficient and incomplete recognition of the range of attainment.

8.1 Understanding the importance of education

I hope school prepares me to become a well-rounded adult who is equipped with the tools to lead a successful and happy life.”

STUDENT SURVEY RESPONSE

The commitment that the Tasmanian education sector has to children and young people is to provide every individual with a quality education (Australian Government and Tasmanian Government, 2024; DECYP, 2023). No matter what career and life choices young people want to have, they will not be able to pursue them without being literate and numerate to a standard that enables them to participate in society (AIHW, 2020). The evidence is clear regarding the high risk of marginalisation for individuals and communities without these skills (AIHW, 2020; Learning Creates Australia, 2021; Shomos, 2014).

Education leads to better economic and social opportunities for individuals and provides broader societal and economic benefits for communities (OECD, 2022). The case for participation in education is clear. At an individual level, attaching value to education increases motivation, aspiration and engagement.

In 2020, new requirements under the Tasmanian *Education Act 2016* (Education Act) came into effect, with one of the most significant changes being the change to

leaving requirements. The intent of the Education Act is based on evidence which demonstrates that students who stay in education and training have much better employment and life outcomes. From 2020, young people have been required to continue to participate in education and training through an ‘Approved Learning Program’ until they complete Year 12, attain a Certificate III or turn 18 (DECYP, 2023).

A student’s educational journey is shaped by support from their parents and families, teachers and educators, schools and their community. The Review heard mixed messages about how well the 2020 changes were communicated and are understood in the community, with some communities still believing that learning finishes at Year 10 (Rowan, 2024; TASSO, 2024). The Review also heard there are further opportunities to strengthen how the range of learning pathways are promoted and valued in the community.

Many parents recognise their role as leaders in their child’s education. They set expectations for their children, fostering commitment and responsibility towards learning. For those parents that don’t value education, opportunities should be given to model what quality education can achieve, and the community continue to provide mentorship and example to the learner and their family.”

TASSO, 2024

The absence of a definition of educational success in Tasmania has meant that the primary focus of success has remained on the traditional concepts of ‘formal attainment’ in schools, particularly the TCE. Less attention is focussed on other legitimate learning and training pathways young people are undertaking inside and outside of schools (Learning Creates Australia, 2021). As a result, many students cannot see themselves represented in the current measure that has become the proxy for the narrative of success surrounding education and training.

All children and young people seeing their learning, growth and success throughout their years of schooling can lead to increased retention and deeper understanding of why completing Year 12 or the equivalent matters.

FINDING 1

There is an opportunity to strengthen Tasmanians’ understanding of the importance of participating in the formal years of education and training.



8.2 What does success mean for students?

Young people need to see school as relevant to their lives, with a sense of belonging supported through strength-based approaches. Currently in Tasmania, there is not a consistent or aspirational definition of why education is important. Public commentary often focuses on deficits. However, the Review saw significant amounts to be celebrated across the Tasmanian Education System.



I genuinely believe that the role of schooling is not just about your NAPLAN results, it is about building people who are future community members. They can collaborate, contribute, be inclusive, accepting, have a go. Will be optimistic, try new things, be supportive and can also read and write. I think that the role of schooling is to ensure that everyone is a valuable member of the community in different ways."

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Education is more than meeting a series of academic milestones. It is a journey of learning, social interaction, and personal growth. High quality education provides young people with options. In the early years, schooling nurtures play, friendships, and foundational skills. As students grow older, their focus shifts toward planning their futures, whether they have clear career goals, remain undecided, or wish to keep their options open. This is best supported by ensuring every young Tasmanian has the essential foundational skills, knowledge, capabilities and dispositions. Providing students with clarity about the value of their achievements and doing so early, helps them see purpose in their education.

The signing of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Declaration demonstrates that all governments are committed to education being not just about academic outcomes, but also in preparing young people for participation in society so that they can be 'good citizens' and contributors to their communities (Australian Government, 2019).

The question of what success looks like is not just a Tasmanian question, but one that is being explored by other Australian states and territories. The Northern Territory's (NT) Review of Secondary Education was published in February 2024. One of its findings was that there is a need for the NT government schooling system to articulate and recognise a broader conception of success in secondary schooling. In the NT, students should be able to demonstrate learning success in ways that are not currently recognised by the system's traditional academic metrics (Deloitte Access Economics and the Northern Institute at Charles Darwin University, 2023).

Similarly in Western Australia, an Expert Panel was established to review that state's senior secondary pathways. The Panel's final report was released in March 2024 and amongst its recommendations, the Panel voiced the need to reframe the purpose of senior secondary education. The Panel noted that in the days of lower school completion, senior secondary education was able to have a more singular focus on preparing students for higher education. Senior secondary education today has a more complex set of inter-related purposes. Given a far higher proportion of students remain in school until the end of Year 12, schools must cater, not just to students seeking to enter higher education, but also to those wanting to undertake vocational education pathways

or enter the workforce directly. It must also cater to the many students who don't know yet (Louden, 2024).

The Review heard that the Advisory Council for Education (ACE), made up of the heads of each education sector in the State, has work underway to develop a shared definition of success for students at the conclusion of their formal education (Independent Schools Tasmania (IST), 2024). This work will also include measures, credentials, curriculum and pedagogy that align to this definition. The Review encourages ACE to ensure that all Tasmanians can see themselves reflected in this definition of success both now and into the future.

FINDING 2

The Tasmanian Advisory Council for Education should consider the work of other states and territories, when progressing the conversations and stakeholder input on defining educational success for Tasmanians.

FINDING 3

Tasmania's reporting of outcomes needs to mature and focus on young people's achievements regardless of their learning setting.

In the Tasmanian context, the 2016 ACER *Review of Years 9 to 12 in Tasmania* considered many of the issues that this Review has examined. The ACER Review found that reporting on Year 12 completion tended to focus on the TCE as the only and/or most important measure of success (Masters, 2016). This situation has not changed since the ACER Review's publication.

The Review heard through submissions, surveys and in its discussions with young people and adults that when asked what success at the end of schooling looked like, the answer was rarely only achieving a TCE or an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Often what these acronyms mean was poorly understood in the community. Young people generally described success as a range of other achievements and attributes that they hoped to have, including functional life and social skills; having choice for future pathways; personal development; achieving personal goals; and being contributing members of society (Learning Creates Australia, 2021; Shergold, 2020).

Overwhelmingly, those consulted called out that success will look different for every student, however, there were some common themes that emerged from these conversations. These are that after formal years of schooling, every Tasmanian young person:

- ▶ is confident going into the world;
- ▶ has a sense of belonging, meaning and purpose;
- ▶ has a sense of self-worth and someone who believes in them;
- ▶ can contribute to society and engage in the community;
- ▶ can create the world they want for themselves;
- ▶ is prepared and equipped with the knowledge and understanding to take the next step, whatever that might be; and
- ▶ is a passionate, lifelong learner.

Regardless of their personal pathway, students want to complete school with a sense of achievement. This validates their efforts but also supports their transition into the community, whether it means employment, further education, or training. A small selection of broadly representative quotes from students around what success means to them is represented below:

"I want school to help me get into a good degree where I can be financially well and stable."

"I want them to have helped me become independent and help me be on track with my future."

"I want my school to foster my interests and help me grow them, while teaching me the required curriculum. I want to leave school with a passion for my creative interests that was helped by my teachers."

"...I want to know how to pay my bills and how to get my taxes done etc."

"More educated and knowledgeable. I want to also feel accomplished."

"I would love to emerge with lots of friends, a good education and more confidence."

FINDING 4

Tasmanians' idea of success is broad and varied. Recognising achievements, including academic, social, or vocational skills builds student pride and encourages continued effort and engagement. This ongoing celebration of diverse forms of success reinforces the idea that education is not a one-size-fits-all journey but a personalised pathway to a fulfilling future.

CASE STUDY: BRAND EDUCATION TASMANIA

Tasmania has always had its own identity. In recent years, through the introduction of the Brand Tasmania Statutory Authority, that identity has been developed into a powerful and uniting brand that is used to market the State. The work underpinning Brand Tasmania commenced in 2018, through a comprehensive engagement and research project to uncover a Tasmanian brand narrative. This uniting narrative has provided Tasmanians with a common language to talk about what it means to be 'Tasmanian'.

A similar project could be undertaken in partnership with children and young people and the Tasmanian community, to discover and share the stories that underpin the narrative of educational success in Tasmania. A uniquely Tasmanian campaign could be developed to build a collective understanding across the community around the importance of education in Tasmania, shifting the narrative from compliance to desire.

8.3 A broader approach to recognising successful outcomes

Attaining a Year 12 certificate is one way young people can demonstrate they have the skills to participate in employment and further education and training. The standards and assessment processes that are used are rigorous and, in that sense, are a fair system for those that participate in it.

However, the Review consistently heard that there is a need for alternative and/or complementary assessments to reflect broader student capabilities (Learning Creates Australia, 2021). There is growing recognition that current metrics, such as standardised testing and qualifications, fail to capture this breadth (Shergold, 2020). Current metrics have the effect of marginalising vocational and alternative learning (Deloitte Access Economics and the Northern Institute at Charles Darwin University, 2023; Loudon, 2024).



Tasmania's education system should continue to prioritise working towards an inclusive and fit-for-purpose definition of educational success. And that work will be most effective and powerful when undertaken collaboratively with young people."

LEARNING CREATES
AUSTRALIA, 2024

The Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC) Board in its submission also recognises the need for broader recognition and that industry qualifications could be reported on more actively to allow the media and community to celebrate student success beyond academic ability (TASC, 2024b).



Learning beyond the classroom should be acknowledged as valid and ways in which this can be formally recognised should be explored."

TASC, 2024B

The Review heard through its consultations that the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE), which is also the basis for certification in the Northern Territory, is a certification that is piloting one of the broadest recognitions of student capabilities through a Learner Profile. Some submissions also pointed to South Australia's and other jurisdictions certification reforms (Rowan, 2024; The Friends' School, 2024).

The Review heard that certifications issued outside of government certification authorities are aiming to show the broadness of student capabilities. Big Picture Learning Australia stated in its submission that the International Big Picture Learning Credential awarded to school graduates can be used to gain entry to work, training or university.

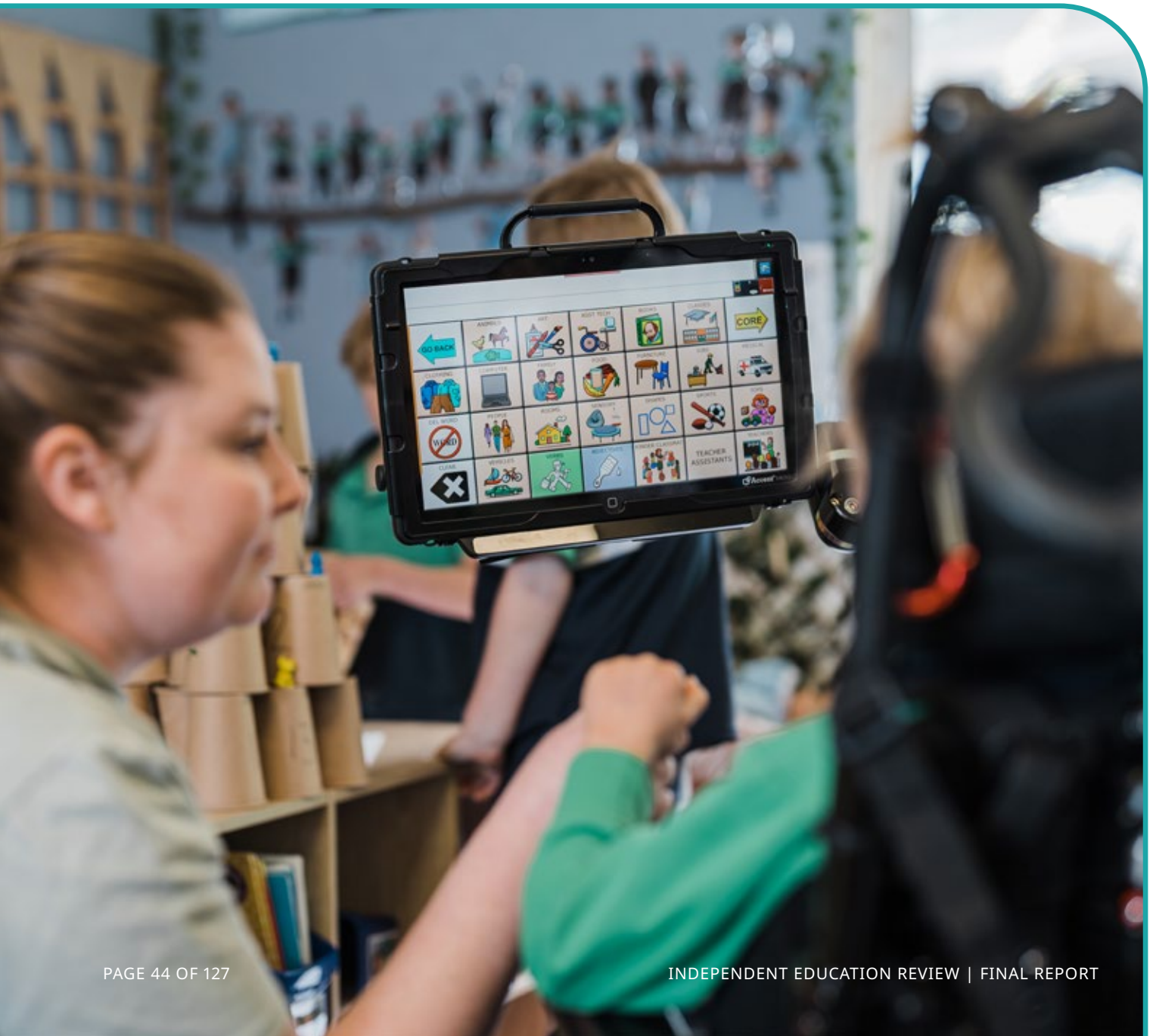
This credential combines a young person's assessment results, with personalised information about their best work, personal achievements and experiences, and provides meaningful insights for employers and university admission centres into a young person's capabilities and qualities (White, 2024).

The capabilities and achievements of students who face significant learning challenges, including those with disability, should also be appropriately recognised. The Tasmanian Certificate of Educational

Achievement (TCEA) is one current way in which some students in senior secondary years have their achievements certified. ACE is encouraged to consider the full range of students and young people in the work they have underway.

FINDING 5

Once a clear definition of success has been agreed in the Tasmanian context, it is crucial that the measures and certifications align and strengthen this message.



8.4 Improving student understanding of learning pathways

A well-rounded education system recognises diverse student pathways. For students to make informed choices, it is important that all pathways are presented and valued equally (Beacon Foundation, 2024; Further Education and Pathways, 2023).

Students need exposure to a variety of post-school options. Schools play a crucial role in promoting these pathways to students, providing guidance on how to pursue their chosen fields. Schools can do this by providing students with the necessary tools and knowledge to decide their preferred options and to make informed choices.

Engaging students and their families in learning and pathways planning reinforces a sense of purpose, fosters commitment, and helps students feel valued as partners in their learning (TPA, 2024). Schools that adopt a co-design approach reported empowering students to take ownership of their future choices. The Review heard clearly that this is more than subject selection.



Schools need to improve how they communicate available pathways to students and families, helping them make informed choices based on their interests and aspirations. This also includes valuing all pathways equally – whether academic, vocational, or other directions – so that students see each as a valid route to future success.”

TPA, 2024

The Review heard that for many young people it is critical that they are informed as early as possible to ensure they have choice and not be limited as they progress through their education. The Tasmanian *Youth Jobs Strategy*, released in 2024, discusses the need to align education and training to the jobs that Tasmania needs in the future. The need for higher levels of education and qualifications is associated with the pervasiveness of advanced technology, used in both the economy and society in general (Jobs Tasmania, 2024b). It is important that the Tasmanian Education System is highlighting this for children and young people and adjusting pathway offerings accordingly.



Our schools provide the foundations for cultivating young people’s aspirations and ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions about education, training and employment pathways.”

JOBS TASMANIA, 2024B

Tasmanian students told the Review they valued supportive environments where teachers and peers encourage their progress, that education should stretch their capabilities and push them to excel. Pathways, such as life skills training, and community engagement, play a critical role in preparing students for life after school.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathways, apprenticeships, and combined qualifications with the TCE were viewed positively throughout consultation, enabling students to gain practical experience and find directions that align with their personal goals. For some students, choosing a vocational pathway before completing Year 12 is a purposeful decision, reflecting their individual skills and career ambitions. The Review saw examples of how schools are responding to these needs, including through virtual learning, Trade Training Centres, work-based learning opportunities and different learning approaches such as Big Picture.

By shifting the narrative and fostering greater understanding of learning pathways and encouraging more targeted support, Tasmania can empower students to explore diverse options.



Listen to students and give them agency in their learning journey."

TPA, 2024

Whenever young people start to consider what their future pathways might be, knowing that literacy and numeracy is an important requirement should aid in their engagement in schooling (Shergold, 2020). Being literate and numerate increases a young person's ability to engage in their chosen field of learning and sets them up for future success.



Children who want to move to apprenticeships should be allowed to do so at the end of Year 10 provided they are demonstrating literacy and numeracy skills that will allow them to function in the workplace and the community."

SURVEY RESPONSE

For young people who are not in a school on a TCE pathway, the current certification system makes it difficult to demonstrate and have recognised their literacy and numeracy skills. Consideration could be given to how such skills might be demonstrated earlier. The Review notes Western Australia's approach, that uses Year 9 NAPLAN results to demonstrate that they meet the standards (School Curriculum and Standards Authority Western Australia, 2024). The Review considers that if students can meet a standard earlier, they should be given that opportunity. This is a further issue ACE may want to consider in the work it is undertaking.

FINDING 6

Personal pathways should be valued and should deliver a high quality, inclusive and comprehensive education with a universal level of literacy and numeracy.

8.5 Making sure we know if students are on track for success

While knowing what success means at the end of a student's formal years of schooling is important, so too is knowing if they are on track to be successful. It is too late to leave it until the end.

In order for students to be successful, they must be equipped with the knowledge, skills and general capabilities spanning the Australian Curriculum (Foundation to Year 10). Given the Review finds there is a need to broaden the recognition of a young person's capabilities and achievements by the end of their schooling, it is important that there is alignment with this recognition throughout a student's education.

For example, the concept of a learner profile could provide visibility and consistency throughout a student's whole education. This profile would allow for students, teachers and families to see individual student growth, and a more holistic picture of an individual student's capabilities and achievements over time.

NAPLAN can be relied upon to understand how all Tasmanian students in aggregate are performing. This informs education systems and schools where to focus improvement efforts, and where they might have gaps in their teaching against the Australian Curriculum. However, while much public attention is on NAPLAN, it is a point in time series of tests, that students take only four times during their schooling.

Relying only on NAPLAN results to understand how well an individual student is learning would be fraught. For educators to monitor and respond to individual student learning progress, schools use a range of assessment and diagnostic tools regularly.

At a State level, public transparency on the State's commitment to literacy will be measured by milestone targets for the *Lifting Literacy Action Plan 2024-2026*, which states 'All years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students will achieve at or exceed the strong proficiency standard in NAPLAN' (Tasmanian Government, 2024).

All states and territories have a commitment to improving student results as measured by NAPLAN. Tasmania's NAPLAN performance against the Australian average or other states and territories is often the focus of public attention. This comparison can be a distraction if it ignores whether Tasmanian students have improved. If Tasmania's rate of improvement is only the same as that of Australia, or improvement occurs at a slower rate, then the gap will remain unchanged or widen respectively.

What Tasmania can control is how it improves its outcomes. The Lifting Literacy initiative aligns with ensuring all Tasmanian students in aggregate are on track for the literacy standard expected by the completion of their schooling.

FINDING 7

As an education sector, to strengthen the public narrative of success, Tasmania should:

- ▶ **be unrelentingly focussed on its improvement journey;**
- ▶ **have clear indicators/measures that provide evidence of whether initiatives being implemented have impact; and**
- ▶ **have contemporary, comparable and comprehensive certification that captures the multiple pathways available.**

8.6 Limitations with current measures of success at the end of schooling

Tasmania's reporting of attainment is not fully aligned to Tasmanian legislation. Public commentary often focuses on the Tasmanian Year 12 attainment rate, which typically reports that approximately 50-55 per cent of Tasmania's potential Year 12 population achieve their TCE. This is significantly below that reported for other states and territories, with the exception of the Northern Territory.

Reporting of TCE attainment does not include attainment achieved outside of schools in other forms of education and training. By only including enrolled students, this reporting excludes a cohort of young people who are not enrolled in a Tasmanian school, but who are legitimately engaged in another option under their Approved Learning Program in accordance with the Act. As a result of an enquiry with Skills Tasmania, the Review understands that several hundred young Tasmanians of Year 12 age are engaged in training with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and are not enrolled in schools.

In the work that ACE is conducting to define success, ACE could also consider how information and data can be comprehensively captured and reported for all relevant outcomes.

I believe that currently the data used to measure 'success' does not include groups of young people who have been successful, such as those in apprenticeships or other forms of training."

SURVEY RESPONSE

ACARA and the Productivity Commission are the institutions responsible for reporting national data provided by each jurisdiction (ACARA, 2024b; Productivity Commission, 2024b). Both ACARA and the Productivity Commission include caveats in their reporting, that data are not comparable across jurisdictions, as each jurisdiction reports different measures. This is supported by research by O'Connor et al, that calls out the difficulties and complexities across the various states (O'Connor, 2024). Appendix G outlines a summary of Year 12 certification requirements for each jurisdiction.

As researchers with some expertise in curriculum policy making, understanding these differences was a considerable undertaking which points to the complexity of some of the rules embedded within each certificate and the difficulties students, parents and schools face in interpreting the requirements."

O'CONNOR, 2024

The Review heard during its visits that the focus on national comparisons did not help all students see themselves in the Tasmanian narrative of success. Many believed that success is determined only by the achievement of a TCE, and other qualifications were not as valuable.



Scoring is (usually) competitive and not standards based. It tends to privilege examinable academic knowledge, rather than knowhow, the capacity to learn or the exercise of learner agency. It has the effect of marginalising vocational and community-based learning and learners often have to put aside their own interests, passions, cultural contexts and motivations and the cultural, economic and educational needs of their communities.”

LEARNING CREATES
AUSTRALIA, 2024

Tasmania’s school starting age and leaving requirements sees students finish school at an older age than their national counterparts, which further affects national comparisons of attainment. The Review analysed the ABS Survey of Education and Work (SEW) data, which is published in five-year age cohorts (including 15-19 and 20-24 year olds) (ABS, 2024). This shows that the proportion of

persons whose highest level of education is Year 12, or a Certificate III is relatively low in Tasmania compared with Australia for the 15-19 year old cohort, but that gap closes significantly for the 20-24 year cohort.

The Review undertook a desktop review that examined the data at each individual age cohort, rather than a five-year cohort. This suggests that many young people have commenced their training during the compulsory years of school as defined by the Education Act. Due to the later finishing age compared with other jurisdictions, these young people appear to complete their training once they have aged out of the reporting parameters for Tasmanian attainment. The results of this review are shown at Appendix H.

FINDING 8

The Tasmanian Certificate of Education is a recognised certificate and metric, however, on its own is insufficient and incomplete recognition of the range of attainment.



Engagement and support for students and families

9

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R2** Strengthen students as partners in their learning for school improvement.
- R3** Harness the power of family and community knowledge through engagement to improve student outcomes.

FINDINGS

- F9** Schools that have robust models that amplify students as partners in their learning have increased engagement.
- F10** The Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework offers an approach that ensures all students receive effective, evidence-based teaching, and some students can gain differentiated, targeted instruction according to their needs.
- F11** Continuity of curriculum and consistent teaching practices are crucial to support student engagement across key transition points.
- F12** More and earlier information should be offered about pathways, courses, career, and learning options that support students' diverse goals and interests.
- F13** School culture is a critical foundation for learning success. Schools that focus on actions that make school a place where students have their growth and achievements regularly celebrated, make for a more positive learning environment.
- F14** Schools that create inclusive environments where families feel welcomed, valued and engaged build the collective capacity to support students' learning.

9.1 Students as partners in their learning and agents for school improvement

Engagement is the extent to which students identify with and value schooling outcomes and participate in academic and non-academic school activities (NSW Department of Education, 2024). Learning is enhanced by increased engagement, and students vary in the ways they can be engaged and motivated to attend school. Engagement is difficult to measure. It involves individual student factors that are often outside of the control of schools (O'Brien, 2023). Attendance is an inadequate proxy measure for engagement, however, it is the best data available to provide a sense of students' belonging in a school environment (O'Brien, 2023).

Student engagement thrives when students are empowered as active partners in their learning, this also creates a sense of belonging (O'Brien, 2023). Central to this participation as partners in learning is having a shared purpose. This requires a clear understanding of each partner's role, the unique perspectives they bring and consideration of power dynamics, place, and the need for transparent and inclusive processes (Cahill, 2018).

Moving beyond student voice and agency, to partnership is more than students 'having a say' and 'being heard' (NSW Department of Education, 2020) and involves students actively participating in their schools, communities and the education system (Victorian Government Department of Education, 2021). It transforms students to active contributors in their education. Listening to and acting on student voice is central to improving schools and student outcomes (O'Brien, 2023).

The Review notes that the Education Act includes a principle on the importance of a child having the opportunity and being encouraged to be actively involved in decisions affecting their participation in education (DECYP, 2023).

Working alongside students as 'partners in improvement' (Cleary, 2024) and injecting student perspectives into traditionally adult-centric education conversations, is a strategy that seeks to cultivate a more dynamic, responsive learning ecosystem. Within existing frameworks for the participation of children and young people in decision making, decision makers, including school and system leaders are encouraged to address the qualities of rights-based participation, with a focus on four distinct, albeit interrelated, elements: Space, Voice, Audience and Influence (Lundy, 2007).

Historically, student involvement in school and system improvement has often been limited to roles where students were seen primarily as stakeholders to be consulted, with limiting assumptions placed on the true value of engaging with students. Moving 'beyond voice' is required to truly deliver on a partnership with students, which is focused on improvement, with an agreement from all partners that 'voice is not enough' (Lundy, 2007).

When students get to the older grades the attitude towards the students should change so that they are responsible for their own learning and are not micromanaged by teachers and the school."

STUDENT SURVEY RESPONDENT

Research highlights the positive impacts of incorporating student influence into educational practices to increase engagement and outcomes (Gonski, 2018). For example, involving students in learning design (O’Connell, 2018), seeking student feedback on strategies that enhance the use of data to improve student learning (Goss, 2015), and establishing continuous feedback loops between students and teachers to strengthen and tailor teaching and learning (Goss, 2017).

The importance of student voice was also evident in submissions to the Review. Learning Creates Australia noted that there is a growing movement nationally and internationally to place children and young people at the centre of designing the systems that impact them. Young people bring fresh perspectives, lived experiences, and innovative ideas which can be used to enrich decision making and ensure that policies and programmes genuinely reflect learner needs. Doing so empowers young people to grow, building their leadership skills and fostering a sense of ownership and agency (Learning Creates Australia, 2024). This contributes to driving long-term engagement and commitment to young people’s learning outcomes.

“Young people need to see school as relevant to their lives, with a sense of belonging supported through strength-based approaches.”

LEARNING CREATES AUSTRALIA, 2024

Teachers who build positive relationships, and know their students well, provide meaningful options to engage them in their learning (NSW Department of Education, 2024). When students feel disconnected from decisions that shape their educational experiences, they reduce their investment in their own learning outcomes. The Review

heard that some students felt like they were not able to be active partners in their learning, leading to disengagement.

“Teachers in leadership positions often don’t understand our point of view, if they wish that we would attend school more and be more active in the community they should work on listening to what we have to say.”

STUDENT SURVEY RESPONDENT

The Review heard of the importance of establishing robust systemic mechanisms for ensuring that student’s lived experiences, views and voices inform school improvement approaches and influence school-level change. To be successful, schools must value the perspectives and opinions of students and act on them in a way that genuinely shapes learning and decision-making at the school (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020).

The Review saw Tasmanian schools that were amplifying the views and voices of their students by encouraging collaborative decision-making in school planning. Staff and students at these schools reported being able to communicate and collaborate more effectively about issues and students reported feeling like respected partners, being able to see change that they had contributed to within their school. It is important to note that these schools used evidence-based approaches to teaching and were clear about lesson design and the sequence of the curriculum content.

FINDING 9

Schools that have robust models that amplify students as partners in their learning have increased engagement.

9.2 Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) found that improving teaching quality is the most effective and efficient strategy to enhance support and engagement for students across all stages of education (AERO, 2023). This requires the consistent application of evidence-based teaching practices in all classrooms, including explicit instruction, complemented by the systematic provision of targeted support for students who have fallen behind in their learning (AERO, 2024b; de Bruin, 2023; Scott, 2023).

What tailored support looks like is varied based on a student's need and context. It ranges from learning needs being met through approaches such as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model, though to targeted wellbeing initiatives and basic needs being met through informal supports such as breakfast clubs. MTSS offers a continuum of support for students with increasingly intensive tiers, from Tiers 1 to 3, as illustrated in Figure 4 (AERO, 2024e).

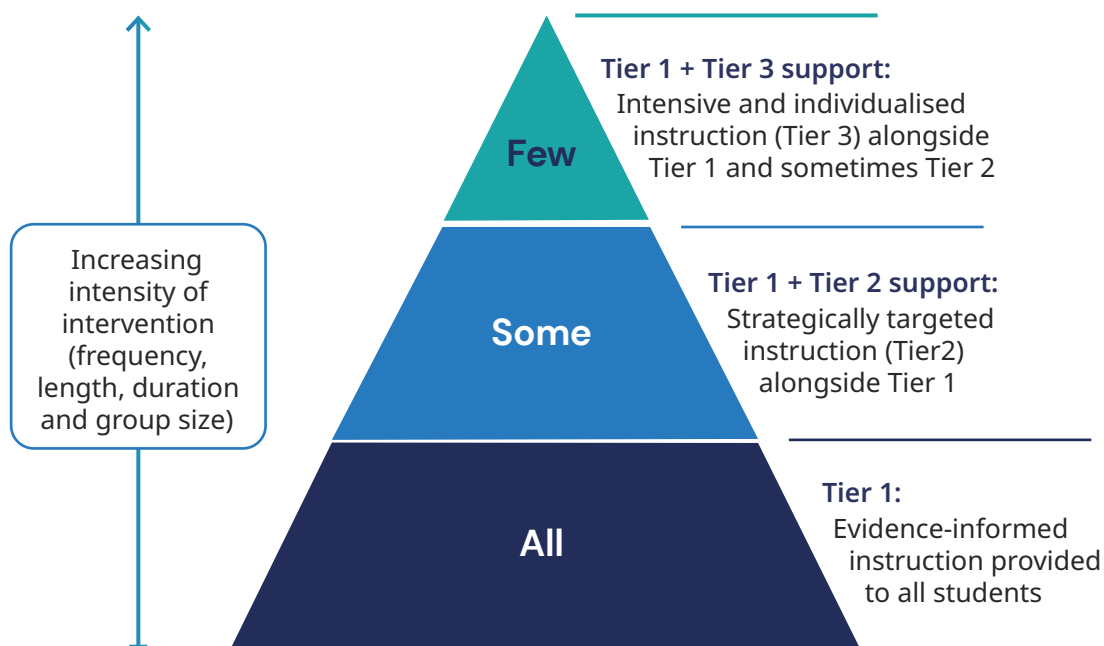
For this model to be effective, it needs a strong foundation of teaching at Tier 1 for all students. This involves schools implementing evidence-based practices, identifying students needing additional support, and monitoring the impact of interventions.



We disengage kids really early if we don't value the way that each one learns."

GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Figure 14: How tiers of support work in MTSS (AERO)



While the core teaching practice for learning remains consistent for all students, MTSS provides for those needing more intensive, frequent, and sustained support.

To provide timely and effective assistance, it is crucial for schools and teachers to have the training and resources to identify students needing further help early on and to deliver targeted, evidence-based interventions through small group (Tier 2) or more intensive, individualised (Tier 3) instruction to help them get back on track (AERO, 2024b).

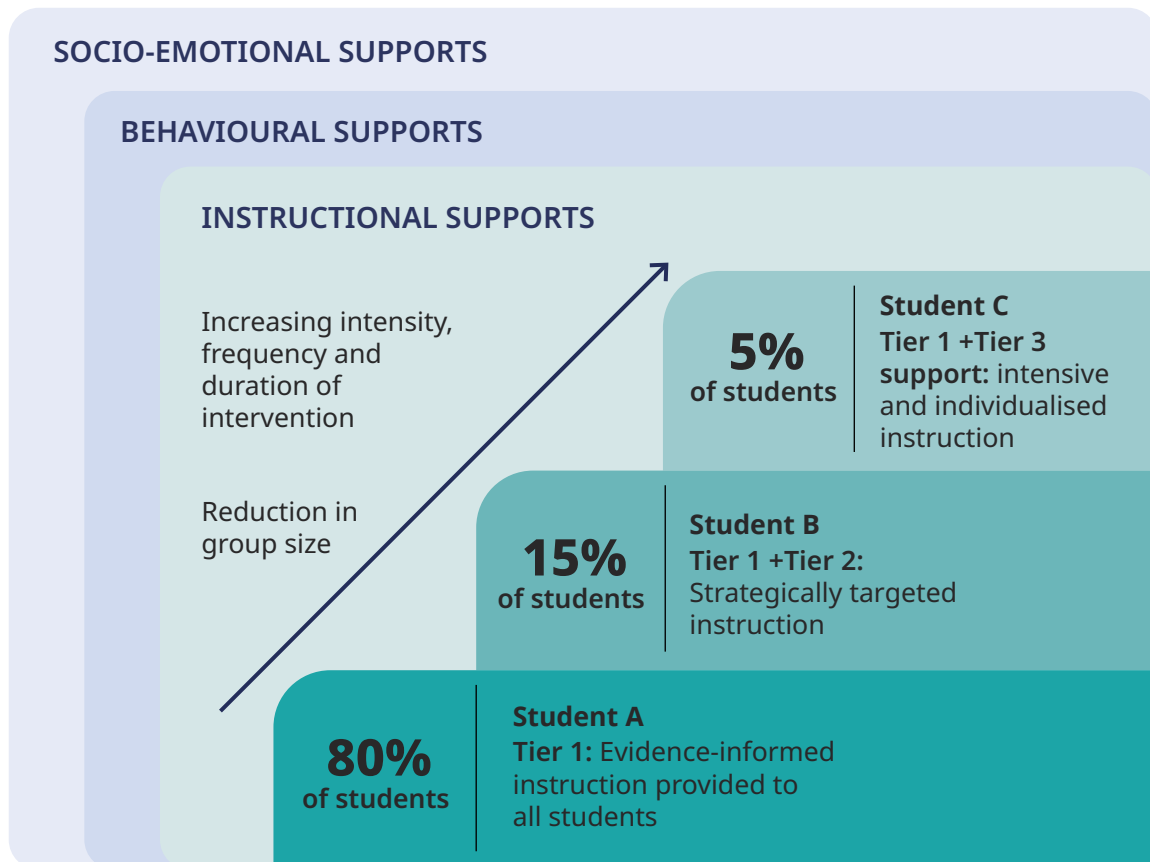
There is strong evidence to support the introduction of MTSS across all schools, and that with consistent Tier 1 instruction, and a team-based approach to selecting and

implementing evidence-based interventions with fidelity at Tier 2, 95% of students could meet academic benchmarks. This would reserve intensive Tier 3 support for only a small proportion of students in need (de Bruin, 2023), and would reduce the number of students falling behind their peers.

FINDING 10

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework offers an approach that ensures all students receive effective, evidence-based teaching, and some students can gain differentiated, targeted instruction according to their needs.

Figure 15: Tiered instruction in a multi-tiered system of supports (AERO)



9.3 Student wellbeing

Research has shown that there has been a growing emphasis on the importance of student wellbeing as a responsibility of schools (Ofei-Ferri, 2023). Wellbeing within education extends beyond the classroom, encompassing students' cultural safety, social connectedness, and holistic development.

AERO found students with greater wellbeing were likely to have higher academic scores. However, evidence also suggests that this relationship is reciprocal and that there is an interrelated link between wellbeing and learning (Ofei-Ferri, 2023).

The Review visited schools with dedicated teams focused on student wellbeing. These schools embedded practices that promoted resilience and emotional regulation,

integrating these skills into the curriculum with a consistency in language used across school and home environments. This comprehensive approach to wellbeing fostered a school community where every student felt known, valued, and supported.

Many schools spoke proudly about how they were responding to broader social issues, including local generational poverty and food insecurity, that affected the engagement and learning outcomes of their students. Wellbeing initiatives in these schools played a key role in supporting student resilience and emotional health. Schools that prioritised student wellbeing, demonstrated an inclusive and supportive atmosphere, where students felt secure and ready to learn.

CASE STUDY: MIANDETTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Miandetta Primary School has established a wellbeing program that is improving student and staff experiences through an embedded culture of emotional resilience and shared language. Key features include:

- ▶ Wellbeing is a subject on the timetable.
- ▶ TEP (Triggers Extra Precaution) and PET (Personal Emotional Tool) for personal emotional regulation and building resilience are embedded into weekly 45-minute wellbeing lessons from Prep to Grade 6.
- ▶ Community initiatives like "Meet, Greet, and Eat" promote consistency in language and expectations between the school and families.
- ▶ The program is not dependent on a single individual and uses a whole-staff approach, with weekly team meetings and assemblies reinforcing shared goals.

Success is measured through positive student wellbeing data and reduced behaviour management issues, and in feedback from parents and students.

9.4 The continuity of learning challenge

Transitions are the periods of change involving classes, teachers, and schools as students' progress through key stages of their education, for example, moving from primary to high school. These transitions often mark significant milestones in a student's social development and require adjustment to new environments, routines and expectations. One of the key times that students need tailored support is during significant school transitions.

Smooth transitions are critical for student success. AERO found that effective transitions involve children feeling a sense of belonging in their new school community. For many students, transitions are a positive experience (AERO, 2024c). However, some may find transitions challenging, and this can have lasting impacts on their educational outcomes. Coordination between students, schools and families, along with dedicated transition programs, mean that students are prepared academically, socially, and emotionally for each transition stage. Successful programs provide dedicated preparation time, allowing students to familiarise themselves with the new class, school environment, routines, and expectations.

AERO found that the purpose of successful transitions is to maintain continuity of learning, both through the transition and into the future (AERO, 2024c). Continuity of learning occurs when learning builds upon prior learning, through age-appropriate experiences and pedagogy. Linking educational transition points is crucial for supporting students' growth.

Educators are the centre of a positive transition experience. For example, the Review heard how some Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) have been facilitating collaborative strategies to support students during transitions. This included enabling primary and high school teachers to share insights on students and align their teaching approaches appropriately. Collaborative transition practices ensure that core competencies in literacy and numeracy are carried over and expanded upon. The purpose is to reduce learning loss during transitions and reinforce shared accountability for student outcomes throughout a student's learning journey.

Curriculum continuity across school transitions is strengthened when teachers understand what and how children learn. It is also crucial that systems and schools provide appropriate resources and support for educators to deliver this learning. Transition success relies on the quality and continuity of support, particularly as students encounter a variety of new subjects and teaching approaches.

FINDING 11

Continuity of curriculum and consistent teaching practices are crucial to support student engagement across key transition points.

9.5 Supporting successful transitions and pathways

Nationally, data such as lower attendance rates indicate that disengagement often starts in the later years of primary school. This is most evident from the high school years (AITSL, 2019). This is true for Tasmania, as shown in the attendance data presented in the Snapshot of Education chapter.

The transition from primary to high school can be challenging for many students, even when on the same campus. Effective wrap-around supports during transitions can significantly impact students' confidence, motivation, and overall success.

Insights shared with the Review from schools and student feedback reveal successful strategies for building student resilience and making this transition as seamless and positive as possible. These included:

- ▶ offering safe spaces for students to express their concerns, build confidence, and form connections, with trusted adults;
- ▶ social integration through activities that encourage collaboration among incoming students and opportunities for older students to support younger ones;
- ▶ consistent teaching practices, particularly related to behaviour expectations;
- ▶ clear communication strategies, meeting future teachers and sharing information about the available support structures; and
- ▶ initiatives like school visits and orientation sessions, sample classes and family information nights.



It is a recurrent theme in our conversations with children and young people that having positive, safe and supportive relationships with adults helps them to feel welcome and safe at school and improves school attendance."

TASMANIAN COMMISSIONER
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE,
2024

The Review saw examples where schools have re-thought their approach to Years 7 and 8 and introduced a more blended model that keeps some of the features of primary school to aid the transition. For example, The Friends' School showed the Review how its model placed students with a teacher they spend more of their time with who knows them well. This contrasts with the traditional experience of moving to Year 7 with a home group teacher who may spend a very small part of the day with students as they then rotate through a number of subject lines with different teachers.

Transition programs that familiarise students and involve their families with understanding new expectations, help ease the process and promote positive perceptions of secondary pathways.

The high school years are the years when most students begin to consider their future careers, education pathways, and life goals. The Review consistently heard from students the need for more and earlier career education and career counselling. This helps contextualise their learning to keep students engaged and motivated to achieve (Beacon Foundation, 2024).



Given the level of disengagement in Tasmanian public schools – 77.4% average daily attendance in Year 9 – starting career education in Year 9 is too late. Nurturing and developing career aspirations in primary school will provide a greater understanding of the purpose of education, introduce the concept of work and prepare young people for the next stage of life after schooling.”

DENNY, 2024

FINDING 12

More and earlier information should be offered about pathways, courses, career, and learning options that support students’ diverse goals and interests.

The Review heard from schools that were communicating the value of continued education and diverse pathways, especially in communities where Year 10 has historically marked the end of formal education.



Generational attitudes about education—what it should provide and how it relates to career aspirations—can heavily impact students’ engagement and perceived value of education.”

DENNY, 2024

In 2016, the ACER *Review into Years 9 to 12* discussed the need to lift retention rates and outcomes for Tasmanian students. The ACER Review outlined the importance of clear objectives, better support for students transitioning to senior secondary pathways, and a more integrated approach to curriculum and vocational opportunities. This included creating an integrated and familiar experience across Years 9-12 (Masters, 2016). The Review heard that some of the ACER recommendations are yet to be fulfilled in terms of intended outcomes.

As learners progress, they face increased expectations and social pressures. Students have to be well prepared to manage these pressures regardless of the pathway they follow. Years 11 and 12 require greater independence in learning and critical skills in time management, organisation, and self-directed study. The same is true for young people who are on an Approved Learning Program that is not school based, such as an apprenticeship through an RTO.

One of the issues the Review heard was the way that senior secondary curriculum is delivered, which is significantly different to what students experience previously in their education. Supporting students to adapt to this new way of working is critical to ensuring successful completion of the formal years of schooling.

The Review heard that misunderstanding academic requirements and grading systems, such as ATAR, TCE, and subject level expectations can create anxiety, particularly for those unfamiliar with these systems. Families rely on schools to help them understand these requirements and processes in order to support their young people in the decision-making process.

A related issue the Review heard during its consultation was the tension between providing diverse offerings to students, particularly in the senior secondary years,

without creating an overwhelming and confusing range of options (Frost, 2024). The Review considers that variety to respond to diverse needs is what is important, not volume.

To provide context to this issue, in 2023 there were 199 TASC accredited courses, with almost half of these courses having less than 100 students, and many with less than 20 (TASC, 2024a). In contrast, in Victoria there are just over 90 Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) studies and over 20 VCE VET programs for students to choose from (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2024). This means Victoria has about 13 times as many students as Tasmania in Years 11 and 12 but has less than half the number of accredited courses (when VCE VET programs are excluded) (ACARA, 2024c).



The current model of wide choice for Year 11 and 12 students leads often to poor subject mix that has no relationship with future career opportunities, particularly amongst students whose experience of schooling has been poor.”

FROST, 2024

TASC in its submission, suggested that a complete review of existing courses, along with industry consultation, would help to address inconsistencies and gaps. It would also allow the removal of courses that are no longer viable. Nationally, course viability frameworks are being explored that, once complete, could be leveraged in Tasmania (TASC, 2024b).



9.6 School culture

School culture is a critical foundation for learning success. The Review visited schools across sectors and diverse socio-economic backgrounds where positive school cultures were apparent through committed school leadership teams. The Review observed these schools undertaking practices that recognised and celebrated student achievement. This was done through the establishment of routines and practices that highlight milestones and self-reflection.

The Review understands that there is no formal definition of ‘school culture’ that is universally used in Australia. However, the School Improvement Tool includes a domain called ‘A culture that promotes learning’ in which every student is capable, and positive relationships between staff, students and parents is prioritised (ACER, 2023). Commitment from school leadership towards a positive culture is crucial for all students to feel a sense of belonging and engagement, built on high academic expectations, nurturing policies, and supportive teacher-student relationships (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020).



Principals stressed the importance of celebrating incremental improvements and successes. By acknowledging and celebrating the progress made in implementing School Improvement Plans (SIPs), schools can maintain momentum and build morale among staff and students. This approach fosters a positive culture that values effort and growth, even in small steps.”

TPA, 2024

Orderly classrooms equal better learning environments. Schools reported that consistent routines created calming environments for students and supported a positive learning environment. The Grattan Institute’s submission reinforced that settling behaviour was a crucial first step in turning around a ‘failing school’, and it cited examples in England.

FINDING 13

School culture is a critical foundation for learning success. Schools that focus on actions that make school a place where students have their growth and achievements regularly celebrated, make for a more positive learning environment.

9.7 Family engagement, community and belonging

We know that families are the first and most influential educators in a child's life. However, genuine family engagement with learning remains underutilised in Tasmanian State Schools."

TASSO, 2024

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Declaration highlights the importance of governments and education systems working in partnership with young people, families, and the community to achieve its goals (Australian Government, 2019). There is no one-size-fits-all approach to good family engagement, but sustaining an appropriate level of family engagement throughout all stages of education is important for maintaining support for students (Australian Government, 2019).

Parents play a critical role in preparing their children emotionally for school. Children are more likely to have a positive experience if parents display calmness and enthusiasm, reducing the child's stress and anxiety during the transition. Equally, if parents are anxious, children may struggle more during this period."

PLAYGROUP TASMANIA, 2024

Families are most directly involved in students learning in the early childhood years. The Review heard that the early years programs and services is a strength in Tasmania. While the ECEC sector is outside the Review's scope, the Review acknowledges its critical role in building learning foundations and engaging

families in education (Donovan, 2023). These include programs and services such as long day care through to CFLCs and school-based programs like Ludo (CET, 2024) and Launch into Learning (DECYP, 2024).

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) can improve outcomes for children – particularly those experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability – throughout their lives and deliver net community benefits. ECEC is also a critical enabler of parents' participation in the labour force."

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION, 2024A

There is a connection between high quality early learning and improved outcomes throughout school life, especially for children experiencing disadvantage (Productivity Commission, 2024a). Engagement in early learning is also important for families as it builds their capacity and confidence to support their children and engage with school life.

Given the Tasmanian Government's significant investment in the early years, and the Productivity Commission's recommendation to make ECEC universally accessible nationally over the next decade (Productivity Commission, 2024a), consideration could be given to how early childhood services complement across levels of government. Evaluating both the impact and longitudinal outcomes of the Tasmanian Government investment in early childhood programs could provide critical insights and help inform decisions on future policy and funding priorities, particularly in the context of Federal Government policy initiatives that act on the Productivity Commission's recommendations.

The Review heard for some schools, family and community engagement can be challenging. Similarly, some families reported that engaging with schools was difficult. For some schools, supporting families to enter and engage requires addressing a range of barriers. Many families need additional support to feel confident in supporting their children to thrive at school, particularly beyond the early years.

The Review visited CFLCs and was impressed by the model that places children and families at the centre. Everything from the design of the CFLC to the intent of the service they deliver was purposeful and co-created with the community. This sense of belonging that CFLCs foster with families strengthens engagement and is something that could be amplified in more school environments.

The Review saw examples of schools focusing on creating inclusive environments, supporting families to feel safe, welcomed, and be valued partners in their children's education. These schools pointed to positive parent satisfaction that indicated strong family engagement and a sense of belonging to the school community for students and their families.

It is important for systems and schools to recognise that learning can be enriched through partnerships with families and the broader community, all of whom can play a role in supporting learning and broaden student's opportunities (O'Brien, 2023). While not every student has access to strong family support, fostering positive communication with families and communities can enhance trust in educational processes and encourage collaborative efforts to support learning. This can be amplified by knowing and valuing the capabilities and experiences of families that can contribute to and enrich the school community.

There is a natural change in the intensity of direct family involvement in school as students age and gain a level of independence over their learning. This change should not impact the importance that families have in supporting their children to learn.

Submissions highlighted the role of families in motivating students to set educational goals. In its submission to the Review, the Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations (TASSO) stated: *"It is essential for Tasmanian schools to harness the critical role parents play in their child's educational journey. Schools and parents need to work together, especially when students are falling behind, to set and achieve shared goals for their success."* (TASSO, 2024)

Families also reported the need for better information and involvement to allow them to support their students to make informed choices about their educational future.



I think we are coming into a very challenging environment where teachers are expected to be all things. So, parent engagement is very important particularly in high school when it is harder to get involved."

SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
CONSULTATION SESSION

FINDING 14

Schools that create inclusive environments where families feel welcomed, valued and engaged build the collective capacity to support students' learning.

Supporting educators

10

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R4** Consider funding Professional Associations to enable them to deliver discipline-specific professional learning.
-
- R5** Strengthen University of Tasmania and sectors collaboration to ensure Initial Teacher Education is preparing teachers for all aspects of the role.
-
- R6** Consider broadening support, modelled on programs available to front line staff in other industries (e.g. Emergency Services, Health), for educators working in complex settings, to maintain and maximise education staff health and wellbeing.
-
- R7** Consider partnering with other organisations and education jurisdictions to inform Tasmania's position on expanding the safe and effective use of digital teaching and learning tools, especially to improve outcomes for disadvantaged and special needs students, through:
- ▶ professional learning opportunities and preservice teacher education; and
 - ▶ research into what works best in using education technology learning applications, including working with disadvantaged schools to test and showcase effective integration.
-

FINDINGS

- F15** Explicit mentoring and peer observation opportunities that are structured and resourced, including time to participate, can aid in ensuring that professional learning and mentoring is not foregone due to other workload pressures.
-
- F16** The Tasmanian Education System could leverage the expertise of professional associations to support professional development for discipline-specific learning.
-
- F17** The Tasmanian Education System could strengthen how it works with tertiary providers, particularly the University of Tasmania, to ensure that early career teachers have the knowledge, skills and capabilities so they are well prepared for all aspects of the classroom.
-
- F18** The Tasmanian Education System can better leverage national and international work, to strengthen the support for and retention of Tasmania's education workforce, as well as improve attraction.
-
- F19** Schools, particularly those that deal with significant trauma, should have access to wellbeing and support services beyond Employee Assistance Programs and more akin to those available to frontline emergency services staff.
-
- F20** Explicit requirements to limit and/or offset workload on school leaders and educators should be explored.
-
- F21** The use of education technology and Artificial Intelligence has the potential to significantly support educators, including reducing their workload, but there are also risks that require careful consideration when adopting and using these tools.
-

10.1 Building the value of the profession

The greatest in-school influence on student progress and achievement is quality teaching (AERO, 2023). The Review heard amazing stories about educators who change young people's lives and go above and beyond every day. They support their students to overcome barriers to education and learning and help them believe that they will be successful.



Having teachers that believe you'll become successful is a really big thing that helps make the difference. It's a lot easier to think that you will be successful and aim higher if your teachers, the people who are teaching you stuff, think you will be successful."

STUDENT CONSULTATION

The value of teachers needs to be promoted, and this work is being led through the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (NTWAP) (Australian Government, 2023). Under this plan, governments nationally have agreed to a joint initiative that aims to showcase the value and importance of teachers and encourages Australians to consider a career in teaching (Australian Government, 2023). Submissions and surveys also highlighted the need to improve the standing of the teaching profession.



Change the workforce culture so teachers are seen as respected professionals and given career opportunities, in a way that equals workforce of lawyers and doctors."

SURVEY RESPONSE

The Review heard from many Tasmanian educators how highly rewarding teaching is. People need to see becoming an educator as a career that is highly regarded. All professions have challenges, however, in the teaching profession, the challenges appear to be more predominantly highlighted creating a negative perception of the profession. A better balance is required if the existing workforce is to be fully retained and the future workforce attracted.



Public opinion about teaching is often negative, and this needs to change. Universities should incentivise students to stay in teaching degrees, while media and public commentary should promote teaching as a valued profession. Programs that publicly appreciate the work of teachers would help shift the narrative."

TPA, 2024

10.2 Connections with colleagues

Mentoring and networking opportunities are critical elements in supporting educator professional development of their teaching practice, and for their confidence and wellbeing (AITSL, 2017b).

The Review heard during its visits that school leaders and experienced teacher mentors are important to developing the experience and skills of new teachers. Peer to peer mentoring also provides reward for those school leaders and experienced teachers who look to grow their own capability and the capability of others.

Tasmania is a small state so it should be possible to create mentoring and teaching support programs which will encourage new teachers, isolated teachers, and teachers who are struggling with aspects of behaviour, skill development or general confidence.”

WALDOCK, 2024

While not exclusive to less experienced teachers, the Review heard that being able to observe experienced teachers in classrooms and having peer observation and feedback greatly aids in building confidence and skills. Providing supports for mentors to develop explicit mentoring and peer observation opportunities that are structured and resourced, including providing the time to participate, can aid in ensuring that these important opportunities are not foregone due to other workload pressures (AITSL, 2024b).

Several submissions highlighted the value of professional networks to support peer collaboration amongst educators by supporting connections locally and nationally

to share ideas, build confidence, and reduce isolation (NEAT, 2024; Waldock, 2024).

Connected to professional learning and mentoring, the Review heard that where there are opportunities for school leaders, teachers and support staff to share and celebrate innovation and improvements across schools and sectors exist, these are welcomed and valued. They not only provide positive professional learning opportunities but also give school staff ideas about what could be adapted in their own context, and where there may be opportunities to partner and share. The importance of sharing, celebrating, and acknowledging teachers' classroom experiences was emphasised in the Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) submission as essential for professional growth and morale (CET, 2024). The Review also heard that CET whole-of-system days were well attended by educators from across Tasmanian education sectors, not just Catholic Education.

Research also indicates that teacher appraisal and feedback significantly improve teacher quality and hones the personal approach to teaching significantly making the job more rewarding and affirming.”

CET, 2024

FINDING 15

Explicit mentoring and peer observation opportunities that are structured and resourced, including time to participate, can aid in ensuring that professional learning and mentoring is not foregone due to other workload pressures.

10.3 Professional learning

Professional learning needs to be differentiated and fit for purpose. It needs to provide opportunities for educators to collaborate and have face-to-face opportunities with their peers and experts to dive deeply into discussions and learning to build understanding and skills (AITSL, 2017b).

Educators and school leaders overwhelmingly told the Review about the value of professional development that is focussed on teaching practice. The Review heard that systemic support and planning of professional learning within and across schools, facilitates teachers understanding of the system’s current goals, policies and procedures. This approach ensures consistency and adherence to standards, and provides teachers the ability to respond to the diverse needs of their students (AITSL, 2017b).



Reduce the amount of meetings related to non-teaching related PL e.g. the recent explosion in PL that is related to compliance, risk management, values – all important but these things can also be expressed as components of good teaching and leading.”

ROBINSON, 2024

During school visits, educators told the Review that online modules and learning have a place, but on their own they were insufficient to deepen understanding and knowledge.



We don’t need information for everyone and a big chunk of professional learning time is spent like this. We want practical teacher knowledge. Otherwise you lose engagement by then.”

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL

The Review notes that professional associations often operate nationally and are able to draw upon expertise and resources. Network of Education Associations of Tasmania (NEAT) highlighted in its submission the significant networking and discipline-specific professional development opportunities that associations can offer and facilitate, across sectors and across jurisdictions, which can reduce the need for systems and schools to create or find their own solutions (NEAT, 2024). The Review notes that in the Northern Territory grant funding is provided to professional associations to support educator professional development.



Whilst support in areas such as child safeguarding, classroom management, student wellbeing and general instructional design is important, the PTAs are the main source of subject-specific learning.”

NEAT, 2024

FINDING 16

The Tasmanian Education System could leverage the expertise of professional associations to support professional development for discipline-specific learning.

10.4 Approaches to increasing teacher numbers

Workforce shortages are a national issue and are already the subject of scrutiny and review (Australian Government, 2023; O'Brien, 2023). Submissions supported the need for innovation to increase teacher supply. Education systems need to attract a more diverse group of entrants, including mid-career professionals, to encourage them to become teachers, as opposed to relying solely on traditional Initial Teacher Education (ITE) pathways.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in its submission highlighted national recommendations to create faster and employment-based pathways for mid-career professionals wanting to become teachers, who currently face barriers such as financial disincentives by going through traditional ITE programs and noted existing or similar programs in Tasmania have the potential to be scaled (AITSL, 2024b).

Schools told the Review about shortages in certain subject specialisation areas, including for STEM, English, languages and trades, with some teachers teaching out of their subject expertise areas. There are no data for Tasmania on teachers teaching out of their field. However, in 2021, AITSL published findings based on data collected in 2018 through a national survey of teachers (AITSL, 2022a). These data are likely to be broadly representative of teachers teaching out of their area of specialisation in Tasmania. AITSL found that secondary teachers of English, Science, and Creative Arts were most likely to be teaching in-field, with around 70 per cent having tertiary qualifications in both content and pedagogy for their subject. For most other subject areas, the proportion of in-field teachers ranged from 54 per cent to 64 per cent (AITSL, 2022a).

10.4.1 Better collaboration between tertiary education and systems

One of the best ways to attract and retain teachers is to ensure their experiences as an early career teacher are positive (Australian Government, 2023). For teachers new to the profession, teacher training needs to prepare new entrants into the profession for the realities of the classroom. The Review heard through consultation that ITE needs to be strengthened. The Review heard that there are gaps between the knowledge and understanding of graduate teachers and the needs of the contemporary Tasmanian classroom.

A number of submissions identified that there are opportunities for Tasmania's education sector and the University of Tasmania to strengthen their work together to ensure teacher training and opportunities in the classroom can best prepare tomorrow's teachers.

... there is a need for stronger collaboration between universities and schools. Experienced teachers should be involved in reshaping teacher education programs to ensure they are relevant and practical."

TPA, 2024

The University of Tasmania is the only higher education provider located in Tasmania. This provides opportunities to work closely with the Tasmanian Education System to develop contextualised ITE. As an example, future Tasmanian teachers would be best served if they were provided with the skills and knowledge in the delivery of explicit teaching instruction aligned with the Lifting Literacy initiative. There is an opportunity for the University of Tasmania to strengthen the alignment of ITE programs with current and future workforce need by considering initiating an independent external review of its ITE course.

FINDING 17

The Tasmanian Education System could strengthen how it works with tertiary providers, particularly the University of Tasmania, to ensure that early career teachers have the knowledge, skills and capabilities so they are well prepared for all aspects of the classroom.

10.4.2 More opportunities for practical experience

The Australian Universities Accord (O’Kane, 2024) highlighted the importance and value of high-quality practical experience, which under the guidance of experienced and expert teachers is essential for beginning teachers to develop their skills and expertise in the classroom (Australian Government, 2023).

This on-the-ground experience is critical to contextualise learning and ensure graduate teachers are well prepared to begin their teaching career. Evidence shows that high-quality practical experience means ITE students are more likely to complete their studies, make a successful transition to teaching and stay in teaching for the long term (AITSL, 2024b; Scott, 2023). Collaborative

partnerships between ITE partners, schools and school systems are critical, particularly in the delivery and supervision of this practical experience (Scott, 2023).

Independent Schools Tasmania’s submission to the Review outlined that independent schools were moving from solely being places where education students undertake teaching placements to being pre-service employers and co-creators of the experiences and learning of tertiary students. This approach better prepares tertiary students by expanding their training beyond curriculum design and pedagogical practices (Independent Schools Tasmania (IST), 2024).

10.4.3 New career pathways supporting attraction and retention

AITSL also emphasises the importance of creating career pathways and recognising middle leaders. Creating pathways and recognising leadership roles helps build workforce aspirations and incentives. AITSL specifically referenced the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT) certification. This certification recognises experienced teachers who demonstrate leadership and commitment to teaching, while allowing them to continue teaching, improve student outcomes and impact on colleagues (AITSL, 2024b).

HALTs are an important endeavour to increase the esteem of the teaching profession and support teachers to reflect on and elevate their practice. What is most important is appropriately leveraging the expertise of HALTs, which will translate most effectively into improved student outcomes. To do this, the development of specific roles for HALTs (and other expert teachers) should be considered (AITSL, 2024b). For example, AITSL points out that Singapore has introduced the role of ‘Master Teacher’ that has been specifically created for expert teachers to support and coach other teachers.



It is crucial also that teachers' classroom experiences are shared; celebrated and acknowledged. The HALT process is one such way excellent practice can be recognised and refined as teachers demonstrate their leadership and commitment to excellence in teaching. Practitioners who feel valued are far less likely to burn out."

CET, 2024

A strategy to broaden career pathways is recognising and investing in middle leaders. Middle leaders generally hold leadership responsibilities in addition to classroom teaching responsibilities. The Review heard of the importance of building middle leadership across schools.

AITSL's *Middle leadership literature review and document analysis* found that middle leaders encourage innovation, lead improvement, provide mentoring support, and improve collective practice. Middle leaders support schools to review student data, using it to inform instruction and make choices about student support, which ultimately improves student outcomes (AITSL, 2023).

AITSL also advised that it has developed, in conjunction with the Queensland Department of Education, 'Professional Standards for Middle Leaders' and while not yet nationally endorsed, they are published and are free to access (AITSL, 2024b).

FINDING 18

The Tasmanian Education System can better leverage national and international work, to strengthen the support for and retention of Tasmania's education workforce, as well as improve attraction.



10.5 School staff wellbeing

Just as student wellbeing is critical to learner outcomes, so too is the wellbeing of educators. AITSL points to research in its 2022 Spotlight article, *Wellbeing in Schools* that teacher wellbeing relates closely to the quality of their work and comprises four aspects (AITSL, 2022b). These are:

- ▶ cognitive wellbeing, including self-efficacy;
- ▶ psychological wellbeing, including job satisfaction, stress, commitment, and a feeling of trust;
- ▶ physical wellbeing, such as burnout; and
- ▶ social wellbeing such as workplace relationships (AITSL, 2022b).

The Review heard that addressing teacher workload and providing them with relevant and engaging training and professional development are key elements in supporting teacher wellbeing (AEU (Tas), 2024; Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania Branch, 2024; Independent Schools Tasmania (IST), 2024; TPA, 2024).

Success breeds success – teachers that saw their students growing and succeeding reported increased feelings of success themselves. This provided educators with energy and optimism supporting their wellbeing. These sentiments were particularly evident when referring to the improvements related to the Lifting Literacy initiative.

The Review visited schools that reported improvements in their wellbeing data that they attribute to the Lifting Literacy initiative. Many of these schools once had significant learning gaps, issues with student behaviour, and distrust and negativity in their community. These schools are now seeing improvement in these areas. The Review is under no illusion that schools still experience issues. However, the Review

heard from teachers that they are now seeing more regulated behaviour amongst students, in part because they can better keep up and engage in their learning and have gained comfort and confidence from known routines. The stories from students and teachers alike about the pride and reward that these transformations have had are remarkable and the impact on wellbeing cannot be underestimated.



Children thrive on structure, safety, routine and support.”

GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

School leaders, particularly Principals, carry significant responsibilities with high workloads. Principal wellbeing is often supported through collegial relationships with their peers. Principals told the Review that they often feel isolated in their role and called for more formalised systemic recognition and support.

System support and acknowledgement of good performance were also highlighted to the Review as supporting school leader wellbeing. Celebrating both the big and small gains is important for job satisfaction. Educators spoke of forums that share and celebrate success broadly as being of high value. The Review was also told that school leaders and teachers value personal recognitions and acknowledgements by senior system staff, as these are important to building and maintaining strong relationships. Educators reported that knowing that their growth and small wins are ‘seen’ supports their confidence and whole school wellbeing.

10.5.1 Secondary trauma

The Review was told how school staff wellbeing is also impacted by students, and often their families, who experience trauma. This impact on staff is known as secondary trauma, which is what happens to people when they see or hear about someone else's trauma.



The increasing pressure on schools to address broader societal issues, combined with the ever-growing list of teacher responsibilities, was identified as overwhelming."

TPA, 2024

The increasing impact of trauma is not only seen in the Tasmanian context. Whilst the Review was being conducted, a national study was released on the impact of secondary trauma on school staff (Fraser, 2024). The research found significant trauma impacts on educators from 'shouldering the responsibilities of social workers' and the associated emotional and workload tolls. This has been identified as a significant problem within schools. The research involved a national survey that found 39 per cent of education staff said they were frequently affected by the trauma of others, while a further 38 per cent said they experienced it sometimes (Fraser, 2024).

The Tasmanian Principals Association submission highlighted that supporting teachers' wellbeing is essential to maintaining a focus on improvement, with Principals noting that structured support, including pastoral care, growth-focused coaching, and regular check-ins on initiatives, fosters a nurturing and supportive environment for teachers (TPA, 2024).

The Review heard that in many schools, the availability of wellbeing supports was often limited to internal support for each other and access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Some schools, particularly those that have significant student cohorts with trauma experience and student behaviour issues, stated that additional support is needed to build and sustain staff resilience and look after their wellbeing. With this comes a need for differentiated support for educators, similar to what is available to frontline emergency services staff.



Provide resources and programs that support the mental health and wellbeing of teachers, recognising the importance of teacher wellness in maintaining high-quality education."

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
TASMANIA (IST), 2024

FINDING 19

Schools, particularly those that deal with significant trauma, should have access to wellbeing and support services beyond Employee Assistance Programs and more akin to those available to frontline emergency services staff.

10.6 Workload

Reducing teacher workload and building educator capability is essential to attraction and retention of the workforce (O'Brien, 2023). However, expectations and workloads have grown over time. These issues are being experienced nationally and are already being subject to scrutiny and review, including through the NTWAP (Australian Government, 2023).

The NEAT submission to the Review highlights the need to reduce regulatory burdens and repetitive compliance tasks, allowing teachers to focus more on teaching, learning, and assessment rather than administrative demands (NEAT, 2024).

The teachers' time-poor issue and work overload is about shifting the balance to increase the dedicated focus on teaching, learning and assessment and reducing the burden of the compliance – the repetitive and overlapping red tape through the regulatory frameworks, such as safety risk assessments in business continuity plans."

NEAT, 2024

Some administration and compliance tasks will always be required to be done within schools. However, reducing the requirement on school leaders and teachers to perform some of these tasks should be the aim. This requires systems to minimise their administrative requirements on schools and ensure that the right role within the school is responsible for completing non-teaching tasks.

Systems and schools should continuously consider ways to minimise administrative

burden and the associated workload issues they create. One way to do this is through reducing 'red tape'. The Review heard examples from schools where it appeared that non-teaching and learning objectives were predominantly determining administrative and compliance requirements placed on schools. The Review heard there is a need for systems to reconsider and redesign processes, or even remove some, starting with a first principles approach about the objectives that place students at the centre of why something should be done.

"...Over the past six years, teaching has become increasingly demanding. The growing administrative workload, combined with more complex student needs, has drastically changed the profession..."

SURVEY RESPONSE

The Review notes that the Tasmanian Principals Association submission which suggests the government sector should audit the impact of non-school business units to determine their contribution to learner outcomes. This would provide accountability and ensure that the resources and efforts of these units are directly supporting schools in improving learning outcomes (TPA, 2024). The Review is also aware that in Victoria, there is an *Independent Review into Administrative and Compliance Activities in Government schools* (Victorian Government, 2024).

Having explicit requirements to remove or reduce workload may help focus resources on what is directly important to student outcomes, and drive a mindset, particularly in central systems, that there is a limit to adding requirements onto school staff. This type of approach would sharpen the focus of central systems about what is most important of the non-teaching tasks that school leaders and teachers need to do and would effectively quarantine the majority of a teacher's time for their core job of focussing on teaching and learning.

FINDING 20

Explicit requirements to limit and/or offset workload on school leaders and educators should be explored.

The Review saw examples of schools that were actively building the capacity of education support staff, such as Teacher Assistants, who are being supported to have a broader role across classrooms. A number of schools that the Review met with highly valued the role and are building the capacity of these educators in a more strategic way, in part to reduce teacher workloads.



In our school Teachers Assistants are involved in professional learning similar to teachers, and they have impact.

GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Review saw that in some schools, Teacher Assistants were leading Tier 2 literacy instruction in small groups. This followed a deliberate action to include Teacher Assistants in professional development and training in explicit literacy instruction. These schools reported that Teacher Assistants felt more valued and contributing when given these opportunities. Other ways education

support staff were enabled to take on more of the administrative load was to have better access to technology and systems.

The way teachers work and are assisted by technology will need consideration over the next decade. Education technology (Edtech) presents both an opportunity and risk to help close the learning divide. It has the potential to reduce teacher workload (O'Brien, 2023). There has been debate over the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support teachers develop curriculum and learning materials, gain data insights and feedback along with assisting students with lower prior knowledge needing remedial instruction. Edtech and AI can assist teachers and learners, but there is also recognition that relying solely on technology solutions and outputs carries risks in relation to security, accuracy and appropriateness of context. Care also needs to be taken that technology solutions do not add to workload or amplify disadvantage particularly where there is complexity and too many systems to work with (Loble, 2024). The adoption of Edtech and AI is yet another area where Tasmania could be best supported through partnering and leveraging national work.

FINDING 21

The use of education technology and Artificial Intelligence has the potential to significantly support educators, including reducing their workload, but there are also risks that require careful consideration when adopting and using these tools.

Rethinking service delivery

11

RECOMMENDATION

R8 Trial a limited number of models where access to resources and services can be maximised to better support learning and the work of schools.

FINDINGS

F22 The Tasmanian Education System has the opportunity to maximise its use of resources by better leveraging the expertise of other jurisdictions and external organisations.

F23 There is merit in trialling Multi-School Organisations in schools and communities that are interested in, and will be supported with, this approach.

F24 Accountability for student outcomes is a collective responsibility, and roles should be clearly defined. The sharing of relevant data and information across schools to inform the improvement agenda needs to be strengthened.

F25 The Tasmanian Education System could explore further models that assist schools to better leverage external partners to support student needs, maximise opportunities and experiences to improve engagement and learning.

F26 The role of service coordinator in schools could be explored to ensure educators can focus on teaching and learning as a priority.

11.1 The challenge of service delivery across the next decade

Tasmania is a small state with finite resources. Earlier, the Report describes the population and workforce challenges facing Tasmania's Education System over the next decade. There will need to be different, place-based approaches to ensuring that quality teaching can be sustained for all Tasmanian students and the communities they live in. Part of these solutions will rely on sustainable community partnerships, appropriate resource allocation and structural support.

Challenges are more prevalent in rural and remote areas, where small student numbers and distance create additional resourcing challenges. However, urban areas are not immune from experiencing these challenges. Providing universal education means these issues are more acute for the government sector, given it must make available access to education for any student.



11.2 Maximising the use of system resources for student outcomes

The role of systems is to set strategy and provide practical and rich resources to support schools in their pursuit of the strategy, whilst giving schools the autonomy and flexibility to implement according to their context and stage of development (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024). Key to supporting schools to do this is the provision of appropriate, centrally provided resources to minimise administration and provide consistency in the delivery of learning.

Submissions to the Review proposed that Tasmania can leverage more resources from other jurisdictions, systems, and non-government organisations (NEAT, 2024; Rowan, 2024; The Friends' School, 2024). Not only would such action mitigate a quality and sustainability risk, but it would free up resources that could be redirected to tasks that directly support schools to deepen their capacity. For example, a number of submissions suggested that curriculum development is a task where Tasmania could partner with another jurisdiction. A partnered approach would enable Tasmania's curriculum resources to be focused on contextualising and adopting curriculum, including supporting teaching staff in delivering the curriculum.



The Department [for] Education, Children and Young People should explore a partnered approach to curriculum reform in Tasmania by adopting the curriculum of another Australian jurisdiction with a well-resourced curriculum team, provision of comprehensive teacher and student resources, and a well-established professional development program to support the delivery of the curriculum."

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, 2024

NEAT further suggested in its submission to the Review, that the preparation of curriculum resources could be supported by the expertise available in professional organisations (NEAT, 2024).

There are other opportunities outside of the development and maintenance of curriculum. The Review notes that the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory face similar issues, and leverage resources on some key education functions from South Australia and New South Wales. For example, some NAPLAN administration functions are provided by the respective larger states and as discussed earlier, senior secondary assessment in the Northern Territory is supported through the SACE Board.

It is also important that the knowledge and resources of Australia's national institutions are maximised, particularly for a small jurisdiction like Tasmania. AERO and AITSL for example were established to explicitly support education systems and schools and there is work that these organisations are already partnering with Tasmania on (AERO, 2024a; AITSL, 2017a).

For a system to be able to focus on few coherent strategies (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024), it must remove or reduce work and expectations on schools that are not aligned to those strategies and be vigilant in not diluting system resources away from priorities. The added benefit of reducing work not aligned to system priorities is to free up system resources, which in turn can help maximise their use toward to supporting schools.

FINDING 22

The Tasmanian Education System has the opportunity to maximise its use of resources by better leveraging the expertise of other jurisdictions and external organisations.



11.3 Schools working together in partnership

Tasmanian schools are the heart of their local community. They are vital as sites of community connection for students and families (Teo, 2023). Across Tasmania the Review saw various partnership models that support schools in their immediate and broader community.

During these visits, Principals across Tasmania referred to building communities of practice that promoted collaboration, shared resources and best practice, supported professional growth and encouraged local initiatives. For example, the Review saw schools building consistent teaching practice and collectively reviewing data to understand shared issues such as literacy improvement, student engagement, and behaviour management.

Principals reported that when these arrangements worked well, peers were supported to connect through informal networks, and this has had a positive impact on their wellbeing. Other reported benefits included the sharing of staff between schools as a short-term measure to reduce workforce shortage pressures or to provide access to specific curriculum expertise.

Some schools are effectively operating in informal groups. For example, in the government system, colleges and extensions schools are part of 'Collectives' or 'Regional Partnerships'. The Review saw some high schools encourage students to a pathway that suits their interests and skills and limiting their offerings for the very small number who remain. Other high schools have chosen to offer something locally that is more in line with interests of some students who do not want, or are unable, to go to college. The Review saw, for example, a Trade Training Centre which is part of

Huonville High School, offering students options aligned to local industries, including aquaculture. The Review heard that when this is done successfully, it is done through collective planning between Principals to ensure high school courses complement what is offered in college.

Across the Review, it was suggested that establishing a 'group leader' or 'principal coordinator' role which has authority and accountability over a group of schools would work to improve communication, reduce isolation, and provide targeted support, particularly in rural or high-needs schools. By sharing responsibility and building capability, advocates suggested such a role could ensure successful initiatives are consistently scaled and implemented in a way that is fit-for-purpose for individual schools.

The Review saw a modified version of this model in Tasmania for schools on the West Coast. The role of the Lead Principal in the West Coast is to support Principals and their leadership teams across their individual schools. Individual Principals do not report to the Lead Principal role, nor does the Lead Principal make decisions on behalf of the schools either individually or collectively. The intention of this role is to provide experienced leadership that builds capability through mentoring and school improvement, coordinate information sharing across sites and lead teaching instruction.

Some schools told the Review that they would be collectively stronger and better able to meet student learning needs if they were to formally operate as one school across several campuses. The Review visited the newly formed Hobart City High School, which operates under this model.

Grattan Institute research has explored this concept and recommends that Tasmania could trial ‘Multi-School Organisations’ (MSOs) (Grattan Institute, 2024). MSOs are defined as strong ‘families’ of schools, bound together through a united executive leadership that is accountable for students’ results (Hunter, 2024). MSOs contain schools that maintain some form of their own identity within an organisation, whereas multi-campus schools operate under a single identity across different locations.

Grattan noted the MSO model has been successful in England and New York City and highlights that leveraging experienced leaders from high performing schools to implement ‘tried and tested’ strategies, and creating consistency, across schools are key outcomes from the approach (Hunter, 2024). The Review notes that there are Australian examples of this concept such as multi-campus colleges in NSW.



The case studies show that effective MSOs increase the odds of school improvement. Leading strong families of between 10 and 100 schools, these MSOs have a mandate to maintain high standards, and are accountable for doing so.”

HUNTER, 2024

As proposed by Grattan, a single leader and/or leadership team would need the authority and control over resourcing to make the decisions about what is offered and where, in close consultation with students and their community, and the leaders of the individual schools (Hunter, 2024).

The Review also noted that ACER considered the issues of small scale schools and made recommendations (in the context of Years 7-12) for multi-campus’ schools across the government sector (Masters, 2016). The ACER Review was conducted in the early phases of the extension of Years 11 and 12 into all government high schools, and debate has continued since that time regarding the merits of maintaining the college system as well as the efficacy of the extension school initiative. The Review heard views on both sides of this debate through its consultation processes.

A one-size-fits-all model or state-wide mandate cannot apply to solving how best to resource and provide learning opportunities to students. Should new models such as MSOs be trialled in Tasmania, significant consultation, careful planning and contextual implementation in partnership with the local communities would be essential. Any trial should start in a community of schools that are willing to pilot such an arrangement. Different contexts for different schools should be taken into account including distance and availability of transport, and the needs and interests of different student cohorts.

FINDING 23

There is merit in trialling Multi-School Organisations in schools and communities that are interested in, and will be supported with, this approach.

11.4 Accountability for student outcomes

Any consideration regarding how schools work together in the future, should rest on what is best for students and how they can be supported. One area that can be strengthened is building accountability for student outcomes across key transition points. The degree to which this has been achieved does not appear to be systemic or part of the improvement process or conversation.

Accountability is the broad notion that schools, districts, educators, and students are held responsible for their educational outcomes (Deloitte Access Economics, 2019). Accountability for student outcomes should not be deferred between schools. Each school has responsibility for ensuring that students are prepared for the next stage of their learning, and that the next school is accountable for ensuring that individual supports continue.

The Review found no evidence of formal accountability mechanisms for individual student outcomes across schools. Instead, the Review heard that as students transition from primary to high school, and into senior secondary education, there is little visibility between schools. There was evidence of some sharing of information between schools, but this tended to rely on informal relationships between individual staff or existing family relationships within schools.

This results in primary schools not knowing how well they have prepared students for their secondary education, because they do not know how their students have gone on to grow and achieve. Some schools may have gaps in their teaching that could be strengthened, if they were able to have information on how their students have progressed.

Similarly, knowing how well-prepared students are when they commence their secondary education can be instructive to ensure early supports are put in place to minimise the risk of disengagement and a student falling behind. When students start secondary schooling with sound foundations, but start to struggle in high school, this could also indicate where there may be gaps in high school teaching and engagement.

The role of a school should be clearly defined and understood so that accountability does not start or stop only with any one school.

Systems have a role in supporting this accountability and sharing of information, through making information and data easily accessible and highlighting for schools where trends are evident. Systems have a wealth of data and information, but educators should not be expected to be expert data researchers and analysts. They require support in having issues highlighted for them, so they can apply the appropriate adjustments to teaching practice that can make a difference.



We keep in touch, we don't check. We have siblings and connections with staff who tell us. It's an informal checking. Attitude of our job is done and off they go. We've never questioned it."

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

FINDING 24

Accountability for student outcomes is a collective responsibility, and roles should be clearly defined. The sharing of relevant data and information across schools to inform the improvement agenda needs to be strengthened.

11.5 Valuing external partners

Rethinking how resources can support student need includes looking outside of the school gates. Leveraging the capabilities and expertise of the local community and other external partners can further strengthen the support for schools. A genuine collaboration and connection between external partners and the education system, provides opportunities for students to gain broader experiences than are often available in their school.

The School Improvement Tool includes a specific domain on building school and community partnerships (ACER, 2023).



The school actively seeks ways to build a strong connection with its local and wider community to enhance student learning, engagement, wellbeing, and opportunity. Partnerships with a range of stakeholders including education and training institutions, businesses, and community organisations are strategically established to address identified student needs. These arrangements provide access to experiences and/or physical or virtual support and resources not available within the school."

ACER, 2023

Partnerships with external organisations enhance real-world connections and have proven valuable for both schools and students. For schools, these relationships provide industry insights and resources, support curriculum enhancement and instructional methods. Students benefit from exposure to professionals beyond their teachers, and practical applications of their

studies, making learning more engaging and encouraging them to consider opportunities they may not have otherwise explored.



Collaborative partnerships between schools, universities, vocational education providers, and industry which open up these pathways are essential in contemporary career education."

Peter Underwood Centre, 2024

The Review saw evidence of schools having strong relationships with external partners providing a range of services, including career readiness programs, daily meals, engagement programs, sport programs, scholarships and support services. These are often targeted to areas of high disadvantage, and low transition rates of learners to further education, training and employment.

The Review heard of examples of making post school pathways visible including Children's University, UniHUBs and early access to tertiary courses during senior secondary education, which build awareness of university pathways and encourage and support students' transition into higher education (Peter Underwood Centre, 2024).

To improve student transitions and workforce readiness, the Review heard from schools that have developed partnerships with local employers, offering work placements in fields like agriculture and forestry. However, in some Tasmanian communities, where there are limited local employment options, there are opportunities for further support from services such as regional job hubs and expanded vocational pathways (Jobs Tasmania, 2024b).

An example of an organisation that aims to assist young people into local employment opportunities both while in school and after school was the Job Hub Regional Network (Jobs Tasmania, 2024a). The Review heard from Network member, *Break O'Day Employment Connect* which worked with schools to make employment opportunities visible and accessible to young people in the regional area.

FINDING 25

The Tasmanian Education System could explore further models that assist schools to better leverage external partners to support student needs, maximise opportunities and experiences to improve engagement and learning.



I would've loved to have entry level opportunities to at least try different industries and jobs. I chat with some friends about what it would be like for Year 12 for example, or a Year 13 where you can do 3 months of work in hospo, then 3 months in agribusiness, 3 in healthcare (even if it's just watching or helping with admin) and 3 in retail... that way you come out of school with 1 year experience in pretty much every industry looking to employ people right away. That would be awesome!"

(YOUNG PERSON QUOTE CONTAINED IN (YOUTH NETWORK OF TASMANIA (YNOT), 2024))



11.6 Coordinating services to maximise teaching and learning

The Report of the Independent Expert Panel's Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System (BFSA Review) outlines that governments should support schools to better connect students to a wide range of community and health services (O'Brien, 2023). There is a growing expectation for schools to cater for all needs of their students. Schools are an important place for families and students to access support, however, they are not the sole source of that support. The Review heard that many schools felt that they were inadequately resourced to coordinate the services required to support their students and families.



Accept that teachers are professional educators. We are not counsellors, psychologists, speech pathologists, nurses, marriage guidance officers or admin people. Society expects teachers to be everything to everyone. Provide these additional services to schools and you will have a much healthier, able and happier education workforce and students."

SURVEY RESPONSE

The combination of increasing numbers of students with complex needs requiring adjustments because of behaviour issues and exposure to trauma can create a challenging environment for schools. High concentrations of disadvantage are linked to increasing complexity of student needs and challenging behaviour. This can result in higher workload and wellbeing impacts that affect the ability of teachers and schools to prepare for and teach effectively (O'Brien, 2023).

There is complexity for families who are navigating through various systems to find the best supports for their children. The role of assisting families to do this often falls on educators, and this takes time away from their core role (O'Brien, 2023). Schools told the Review that teachers' time needs to primarily focus on teaching and learning, and schools need to have other staff who are able to undertake the additional administrative, compliance and coordination tasks that support student learning.

The BFSA Review suggests the 'Full Service School' Model as a way to strengthen connections with communities and support students. The BFSA Review acknowledges that there is no single definition of a full service school but uses *'these schools provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community'* (O'Brien, 2023). The Review acknowledges the Full School Model, however in the Tasmanian context, it considers the implementation of such a model must be differentiated and place-based, in response to community need and adequate access to relevant skills and resources. The focus on learning must be central to the school's improvement agenda and not disrupted.

As previously outlined, the Review was impressed by the CFLC model that places children and families at the centre. CFLCs provide access to a range of integrated services and wrap around supports for children and families up until the age of 5. In this model, Centre Coordinators lead the coordinated delivery of these programs and services.

To reduce the administrative burden on schools and educators, the Review considers applying a role similar to the CFLC Coordinator in the school context. Coordination of services required to support young people and families must be in the pursuit of maximising their learning and not disrupt their learning time.

Through the implementation of such a role, the responsibility for the coordination of the support services required to improve student attendance, engagement and learning shifts to the coordinator, and away from educators.

Not every school would need this level of service coordination. The Review considers such a role could operate across schools supporting communities, managing scarce resources and building capability and community connection. How this role would look depends on the needs of and capacities within each community. This model could allow for tailored assistance across schools, addressing specific regional challenges and providing a consistent point of contact for families and school communities.

FINDING 26

The role of service coordinator in schools could be explored to ensure educators can focus on teaching and learning as a priority.

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

12

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R9** The Tasmanian Education System should create a clear cadence for change and build clear lines of accountability through a focus on what matters most: what is being taught and how it is being taught.
-
- R10** As a small jurisdiction and in the context of existing workforce capacity, Tasmania should intentionally and systematically source the most appropriate evidence-based support and resources to enhance implementation and de-implementation.
-
- R11** Adequately planned and resourced implementation, along with monitoring of progress and evaluation of impact, is required to drive, refine, sustain and embed practice.
-

FINDINGS

- F27** Implementation frameworks should allow for differentiation in implementation that enables schools to tailor to their context.
-
- F28** To be highly effective, the Tasmanian Education System should focus and resource fewer, evidence-based, strategically aligned priorities.
-
- F29** A structured change management approach should underpin all initiatives to ensure successful outcomes.
-
- F30** The Tasmanian Education System should continue to partner with subject matter experts to support the development, delivery and capability building underpinning new initiatives.
-

12.1 Implementation from boardroom to classroom

Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation are interconnected processes that drive sustainable improvement. Effective implementation and monitoring of new initiatives and programs in schools are critical to maximising educational outcomes for all students (AERO, 2024d). There must be a clear cadence of change from the boardroom to the classroom. Schools are the primary site of implementation, it is critical that they are provided with clear guidance, resourcing and ongoing support (AERO, 2024b).

Given the time that it takes to embed reform, it is essential that capability is built within and across the system so that educational change is woven into policies and procedures.



Build a durable coalition for change.”

BRYANT & JAYARAM, 2024

As outlined in the Report, educators are already facing a range of challenges from resourcing constraints to significant workloads. Drawing insights from Bryant et al. (2024) and AERO (2024), good implementation leads to a culture of change readiness, not change fatigue. Having a deliberate, replicable change framework that has the end user in mind and can support the implementation of any new initiative or program, is essential.

Implementation of any large-scale initiative is complex. Part of this complexity is understanding exactly what implementation is. ‘Implementation’ is often misused as a synonym for an announcement, delivery, adoption or use of a particular program or resource. While discrete activities such as delivering workshops, online professional learning or using a specific resource may support a component of implementation, when provided as a one-off activity, they are unlikely to achieve sustained adoption of evidence-based practices (AERO, 2024d).



12.2 Structured and sustained implementation

Successful initiatives are often the ones that are intentional, resourced, staged and measured. They invest in authentic, two-way communication with not only educators, but also with students, families and communities to design better programs and build deeper buy-in (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024). Any new initiative must be clearly aligned to broader strategic outcomes or priorities of the school, sector or system (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024). These initiatives rally stakeholders to ensure that everyone, from system leaders to Principals and teachers are aware and engaged. Through engaging end users, it provides a clear understanding of the ‘why’ behind change, reduces potential resistance and allows individuals to champion the change across their networks.

AERO (2024) highlights the importance of systems working collaboratively with schools to provide actionable resources and ongoing support, ensuring that implementation is not an isolated event but a continuous process. For implementation to be successful and sustainable, schools need a deliberate, staged, and culturally responsive approach to implementing evidence-based practices (AERO, 2024b). Having a deliberate and structured approach to implementation, provides schools with a reliable, informed framework that enables schools to tailor implementation to their context. This includes understanding and working through implementation stages, identifying and responding to enablers and barriers, selecting key implementation strategies and monitoring implementation outcomes (AERO, 2024d).



The Review draws on the research of McKinsey & Company, examining high performing education systems around the world. Their 2024 report identified that it is the role of systems to set strategy, provide practical and rich resources, and support to aid schools in their pursuit of the strategy (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024). It is also critical to give schools the autonomy and flexibility to implement according to their context and stage of development. This was also strongly supported by AERO, whose submission and resources give similar guidance to education systems to support schools as the primary agents of change (AERO, 2024b).

A clear strategy informed by a theory of change is necessary to improve student outcomes. Clarity on how the change will be delivered, supported and managed across schools is critical, allowing them to tailor system-led priorities to their context (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024).

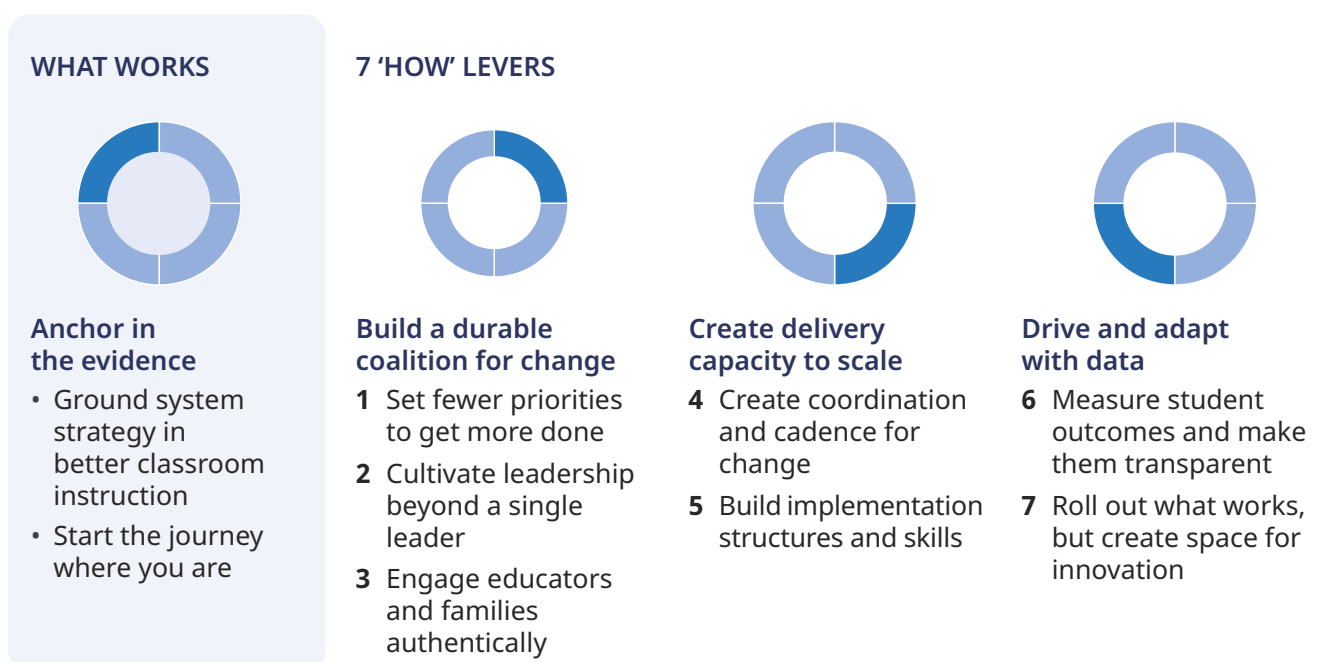
In its submission to the Review, AERO highlights that factors such as demographics, staffing, school readiness and resourcing should influence how schools adopt new practices. Supporting schools to assess the fit and feasibility of these changes, including timelines and priorities, is critical for ensuring credibility, buy-in and, ultimately, success (AERO, 2024b). Any implementation framework must account for these differences, allowing schools to select the right implementation approach, with appropriate resources.

FINDING 27

Implementation frameworks should allow for differentiation in implementation that enables schools to tailor to their context.

McKinsey provides a model based on its findings on what high performing systems do, that Tasmania could consider when looking to strengthen or develop a consistent change practice (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024).

Figure 16: McKinsey and Company's model for implementing change



12.3 The importance of de-implementation

Educators are regularly pulled in many directions. For new initiatives to be successful, it is often the case that some existing work needs to stop. Leaders of successful school systems need a clear vision and limited set of coherent, sustained, and evidence-based priorities. Leaders define these non-negotiables based on the evidence of what works and ensure that money and energy is channelled into what matters most (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024).



Set fewer priorities to get more done."

BRYANT & JAYARAM, 2024

The Review has heard of a number of examples of initiatives that have been implemented due to a political imperative, reaction to a perceived problem or because of new research or insights. Often, these programs are announced without resourcing to implement, without the clear alignment to or understanding of school or student need, or without having the end-user in mind. Without clarity on why the change is being made, these programs are often destined to fail.



There has been a pattern of the government announcing education policies without then resourcing the department to properly implement changes"

AEU (TAS), 2024

De-implementation provides an opportunity for systems, sectors and schools to think about, and lead, a change process which gives educators the time and energy to focus on what matters most. De-implementation, like implementation, is most likely to lead to a sustainable change when the process is evidence-based, thought through and well-defined.

In some instances, schools may need the support of a system when ceasing a program or initiative that might be interwoven with the culture of a school, or the professional identity of individual educators. System led de-implementation can provide the authorising environment schools need to implement the changes, providing the resources and support required to lead the change.

The Review heard that successful de-implementation, that is led in partnership with school leaders, and in collaboration with school staff was most effective. Having conversations and a collective understanding about why and how certain work will stop and what will continue is a key enabler for adoption. The Review saw some examples where systems considered de-prioritisation as an essential part of introducing any new initiative. The Catholic education sector, for example, showed the Review an explicit 'de-implementation' plan which supported the reprioritisation of resources.

FINDING 28

To be highly effective, the Tasmanian Education System should focus and resource fewer, evidence-based, strategically aligned priorities.

12.4 Roadmap for change

One of the biggest mistakes systems can make is to “lift and shift” best practices without considering the need for schools to ‘start where they are’ (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024). The Review heard that providing visibility of the initiative roadmap, alongside building capacity for schools to determine their approach based on where they are, gives them the ability to successfully implement initiatives.

Using a staged approach to implementation builds understanding of the broader program of work and makes the implementation more manageable. Staged implementation further supports schools to have a line of sight across the whole initiative, allowing them to understand what is next in the journey.

The stages generally build upon each other, growing success when milestones are achieved. The stages highlight a school’s key activities and considerations throughout the implementation of evidence-based practice and demonstrates that no one stage is more important than another. Leaders can draw on stages to reflect on how far they have come in the implementation process and plan for what comes next (AERO, 2024d).

In the context of the Lifting Literacy initiative, schools across sectors reported that the staged implementation approach created greater buy-in. Schools that had commenced this journey ahead of the statewide mandate felt like their system understood the investment they had already made, while schools at the beginning of their journey felt supported to make the start.

12.5 Measuring and monitoring success

Central to a good change management approach is consideration of how educators, families, and students will be supported and success measured. This is refined and improved based on feedback and evidence.

Implementation and de-implementation are the first steps when a new initiative or project are introduced. Enablers and barriers show what is working well and what is getting in the way when implementing evidence-based practices. Tailoring implementation in response to the enablers and barriers in a school increases the likelihood of success.

A clear plan for measuring and monitoring success across the life of the initiative must be developed and rolled out as part of the initial implementation phase. This includes clearly defined lead and lag measures so that schools, sectors and systems can understand how success will be measured, what will be reported and what will be used to refine and measure the success of the implementation strategy.

Not every measure needs to be publicly reported or reported at a system level. Individual schools will invariably have their own measures that will show individual change and indicate where there are gaps, in order to tune their approach.

Successful systems however will use collated data to improve their interventions. As initiatives are rolled out, the change framework creates space for innovation and methods for measuring impact, which feeds back into the evidence base of what works (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024).

FINDING 29

A structured change management approach should underpin all initiatives to ensure successful outcomes.



12.6 Building expertise

As discussed earlier in the Report, Tasmania often lacks the capability on island to lead the delivery of highly specialised functions. Recognising that these skills and expertise are available in other, often larger jurisdictions or through leveraging subject matter experts, especially when initiatives are being established, is crucial for success.

In the context of the Lifting Literacy initiative, the Review has heard of a number of instances where sectors have engaged subject matter experts to design, deliver and coach systems, leaders, and educators to build their capabilities. This approach has reportedly been widely successful with many educators valuing the face-to-face time with such experts.

Successful systems ensure dedicated implementation capacity within corporate teams and across schools. When external expertise is brought in, sectors, systems and schools should also look to how the capability of the broader workforce can be built. In addition to great educators, school systems need great project managers and implementors to translate strategy into reality in every classroom across the system (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024). This involves:

- ▶ establishing clear roles and responsibilities for making decisions and approving investments;
- ▶ clear lines of two-way communication;
- ▶ ability to build capability at all levels to support and implement a new initiative;
- ▶ as well as creating an army of changemakers across an organisation (Bryant & Jayaram, 2024).

FINDING 30

The Tasmanian Education System should continue to partner with subject matter experts to support the development, delivery and capability building underpinning new initiatives.

Stay the course on Lifting Literacy

13

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R12** Stay the course on the Lifting Literacy initiative as the Review witnessed several indicators of early impact.
- R13** Over the next 10 years, ensure that the existing and future workforce is equipped with the knowledge, skills and resources to ensure the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy are taught across all phases of learning and subject disciplines.
- R14** The advice from the Lifting Literacy Outcomes Monitoring Group, along with system and school monitoring, needs to inform the pace of implementation of other major state-wide initiatives to ensure there is a sound evidence-base guiding the direction, resourcing, and implementation.

FINDINGS

- F31** A laser like focus on what matters most helps teachers and students focus on where to direct their energy.
- F32** Embracing the evidence on the best ways to teach and the best ways to learn at a class, school, and system level is the first crucial step. The real challenge lies in implementation and monitoring.
- F33** Early school-based feedback indicates evidence-based structured (systematic and explicit) literacy teaching is supporting students' growth and progress.
- F34** The full impact of a large-scale system-wide approach to the teaching of literacy on student learning outcomes will take time to see.
- F35** Starting points vary between schools and implementation needs to account for these differences. Schools and educators need wrap-around systemic support, that is tailored to their context so they can effectively deliver literacy instruction.
- F36** Before policy makers consider undertaking a systemic approach for numeracy, the Lifting Literacy initiative should become truly embedded with sustained improved outcomes evident over time. That said, there is no reason why smaller scale evidence-based initiatives at the school-level cannot be supported for those schools that are ready.

13.1 Literacy

Being literate is fundamental to how we navigate our world. It can change lives (Tasmanian Government, 2024). Literacy is foundational to all other learning. Low literacy and numeracy skills limit students' ability to engage with the curriculum (de Bruin, 2023). Literacy and numeracy are essential for post-school success (de Bruin, 2023).

Research highlights that evidence-based teaching practices, grounded in the cognitive science behind how students learn through acquiring, retaining, retrieving, and consolidating knowledge, benefits students across all year levels, subjects and backgrounds (de Bruin, 2023). The often reported low literacy levels among Tasmanian students are a stark reminder that Tasmania needs to improve literacy, as low proficiency rates can affect student engagement, attendance, retention and post-school success (de Bruin, 2023).

13.1.1 Lifting Literacy initiative

There is substantial work underway to improve literacy in Tasmania. In 2021 the Tasmanian Government established the Literacy Advisory Panel. The Panel produced an evidence-based report with recommendations to Government which are now being implemented in schools across the State. Part of this work includes an aspirational goal of 100 per cent functional literacy for every learner (Tasmanian Government, 2024).

The initiative aims that by 2026, Tasmania will adopt a statewide structured literacy approach, ensuring consistency across schools and embedding practices informed by cognitive science (Tasmanian Government, 2024).



The Lifting Literacy program is a good thing and it's a good start."

GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning is most effective when students can connect new information to prior knowledge. When schools and teachers monitor students learning, and target interventions, student learning outcomes improve. In its submission, AERO commends efforts to align reading instruction with structured literacy through the Lifting Literacy initiative (AERO, 2024b). Research highlights the benefits of explicit instruction and guided practice in managing cognitive load and promoting retention for students (AERO, 2024b; Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020).

Delivering the Australian Curriculum requires a dual focus. Teachers must ensure literacy is core and embedded across all areas of the curriculum. This extends beyond subject-specific knowledge to include the development of core skills and capabilities (ACARA, 2024a).

The Review saw some schools that were successfully applying explicit teaching practices with broader, inquiry-based pedagogies. These approaches demonstrated the transferability of teaching methods, highlighting that explicit instruction can coexist with student-centred practices, preserving both student voice and teacher agency.

Doing this [science of learning] across subjects helps with consistency.”

CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

AERO’s submission to the Review further outlines that explicit instruction and guided practice are effective teaching practices because they help to manage cognitive load by introducing new information in small, manageable chunks (AERO, 2024b). Tasmania’s Lifting Literacy initiative emphasises high-impact, structured practices aligned with cognitive science, including daily dedicated literacy time and extended learning blocks to deepen foundational skills (Tasmanian Government, 2024).

As the greatest in-school influence on student progress, teaching should consistently incorporate evidence-based practices, such as explicit instruction, alongside systematic, targeted support for students who are behind in their learning (AERO, 2023). Misconceptions around terms like the ‘Science of Reading’ and ‘structured literacy’ persist, often narrowly interpreted as phonics alone rather than a broader approach that includes oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Tasmanian Government, 2024). The Review heard that while some teachers and educators initially resisted explicit instruction, fearing it may limit flexibility, over time they had reported improved student growth and students themselves noticing increased engagement and confidence with the approach.

The way I’m learning has changed. It’s all about paying attention. We can be called upon at any time. I feel safe in learning.”

STUDENT CONSULTATION –
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

AERO’s research highlights the MTSS as an effective strategy for organising the support needed to close learning gaps across different ages and diverse contexts (de Bruin, 2023). The Review heard from schools that there is evidence that the MTSS model is effective at lifting literacy outcomes for all students through the systematic use of explicit teaching. This includes improved academic and behavioural outcomes, and reducing stigma associated with the need for additional support in literacy.

FINDING 31

A laser like focus on what matters most helps teachers and students focus on where to direct their energy.

13.2 Maximising system resources supporting literacy

Stakeholders support the Lifting Literacy initiative and advocate for consistent implementation and monitoring, along with expanded resources (AERO, 2024b; Beacon Foundation, 2024; Grattan Institute, 2024).

Broader systemic ‘wrap-around’ support is essential for good implementation. Alignment reduces variability in literacy outcomes and reduces the impacts on teacher workload by standardising instructional expectations. This includes consistency in literacy instruction, monitoring of student growth, professional learning, and system-wide support.



The support system we have behind us has been invaluable.”

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

FINDING 32

Embracing the evidence on the best ways to teach and the best ways to learn at a class, school, and system level is the first crucial step. The real challenge lies in implementation and monitoring.

Knowing where students are at and their development needs relies on teachers being able to monitor their growth and progress to identify areas of strength and improvement (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020). The Review noted that common diagnostic tools are being adopted by schools and systems across Tasmania, with schools reporting that they were already seeing growth in student-level reading and spelling data.

Initiatives like CET’s *Insight Project*, as outlined in its submission, integrates the Science of Reading to enhance teachers’ understanding of how the brain learns to read. CET is supporting early intervention and incorporating literacy across subjects through system-wide professional development and coaching. Launched in 2023, the *Insight Project* applies high-impact teaching practices to all educational levels. Implementation of this approach has included a gradual release model to build capacity and capability of teachers and educators across the system (CET, 2024).

In its submission to the Review, IST advised that it is delivering focused professional development that is boosting educators’ confidence, sharpening their focus, and enhancing student outcomes. The Review heard that many independent schools are committed to teaching that is explicit, systematic, and based on contemporary, peer-reviewed evidence (Independent Schools Tasmania (IST), 2024).

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) submission to the Review outlined that since June 2023, DECYP has been implementing a minimum reading guarantee for government schools, with all Tasmanian schools to be following a structured, evidence-based approach by 2026 (DECYP, 2024).

FINDING 33

Early school-based feedback indicates evidence-based structured (systematic and explicit) literacy teaching is supporting students’ growth and progress.

CASE STUDY: CATHOLIC EDUCATION TASMANIA

While the Review saw many schools implementing structured literacy, the most progressed system approach was evident in Catholic schools.

CET shared through its submission to the Review the following key features of its approach (CET, 2024).

From the beginning of 2023, Catholic educators across Tasmania have had opportunities to study the Science of Learning and commit themselves to learning specific high impact teaching practices that will improve learning in every subject at every level, in every CET school.

The *Insight Project* has one single objective: to improve the learning achievement of every student in all schools, by focusing on improving three key foundations of teaching and learning:

- 1** A comprehensive, knowledge rich Curriculum: that supports student's growth in learning, knowing and remembering – every day.
- 2** Cognitive Science (the Science of Learning): Developing our understanding about how people learn; to overcome the limits of working memory in order to maximise student learning and to build long-term memory in all key subjects.
- 3** High impact Pedagogy: Regular and intensive coaching to assist our educators in actively applying the science of learning as we design highly efficient and effective teaching and learning methods in the classroom.

13.3 Sustained commitment to improving literacy

Achieving lasting improvements in literacy in Tasmania requires a long-term approach guided by a clear theory of change and effective change management practice. For decades, debates over the best methods for teaching literacy have been a central issue in education globally, with students bearing the consequences of shifting trends and inconsistent practices.

While it is early days, the Lifting Literacy initiative has all the features that the research indicates supports success as outlined in AERO's submission to the Review:

- 1 Promote the systematic adoption of evidence-based teaching practices that align with the cognitive science behind how students learn.
- 2 Provide teachers and leaders with clear, actionable guidance, training and support to effectively implement evidence-based teaching practices and a multi-tiered system of supports in schools.
- 3 Commit to a coherent, system-wide and culturally responsive strategy to ensure implementation of evidence-based practices is staged, sustainable and scalable (AERO, 2024b).

FINDING 34

The full impact of a large-scale system-wide approach to the teaching of literacy on student learning outcomes will take time to see.

The Review heard from schools of the need for a clear purpose and continuity in literacy frameworks to fully integrate new practice and avoid setbacks associated with policy shifts and political cycles.

"We can't keep rebooting every time someone new comes in."

SCHOOL CONSULTATION SESSION

The Review visited schools which have been implementing structured literacy instruction for some time, and acknowledge that across the systems, schools were at different stages of their implementation journey. This included several schools across all sectors that are well progressed, however this was most evident across all of the Catholic schools visited. Across these schools, leadership, teaching staff and students were positive about the impact of this way of teaching and learning and strongly advocate for its continuation.

FINDING 35

Starting points vary between schools and implementation needs to account for these differences. Schools and educators need wrap-around systemic support that is tailored to their context so they can effectively deliver literacy instruction.

As previously outlined, while maintaining effort on the Lifting Literacy initiative is essential, and prioritising literacy remains paramount, the principles of evidence-based, explicit, and systematic instruction that form the foundation of the initiative should extend across all areas of teaching.



The importance of time is key. It will take time to see results."

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

The Review is cognisant that much effort and resources are needed to sustain the Lifting Literacy initiative. During school consultations, the Review heard that schools that were advanced in their implementation of explicit instruction in literacy were now talking about how they will approach numeracy with similar evidence-based practices. At this stage a whole of state numeracy initiative risks diluting the attention and focused effort required to implement the Lifting Literacy initiative. There is no reason why, however, individual schools that are ready cannot commence evidence-based teaching approaches to numeracy.

This is an opportunity for the Tasmanian education sectors to continue to work together to ensure that resources and learnings are collectively shared. Sustaining focus, implementation support, and resources over the longer term on Lifting Literacy is important to the lives of individuals and Tasmania's overall future.

FINDING 36

Before policy makers consider undertaking a systemic approach for numeracy, the Lifting Literacy initiative should become truly embedded with sustained improved outcomes evident over time. That said, there is no reason why smaller scale evidence-based initiatives at the school-level cannot be supported for those schools that are ready.



14.1 Appendix A: List of Schools and Services Consulted

Figure 17: Map of schools and services consulted

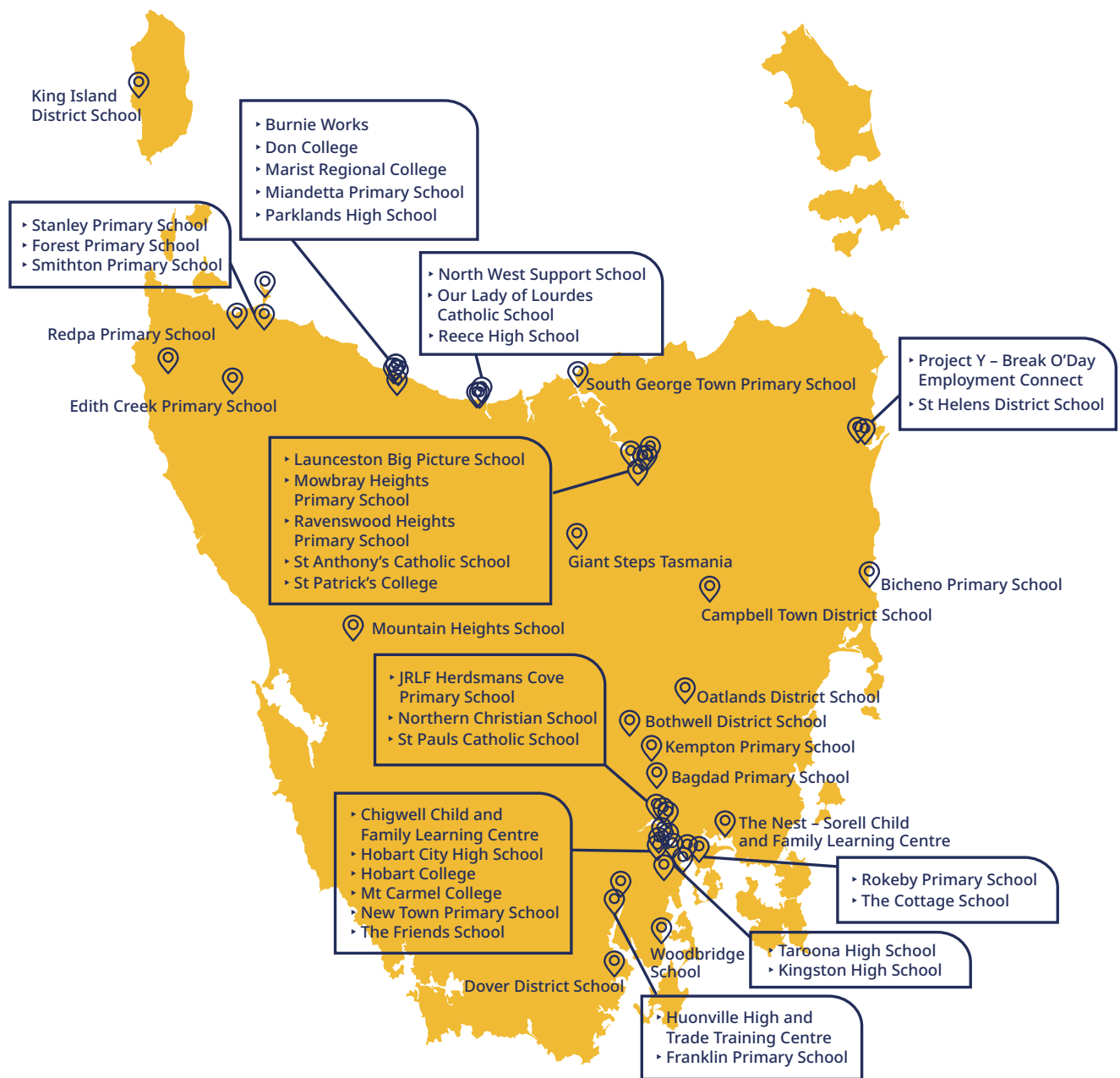


Table 2: DECYP schools consulted

Visited in-person	Consulted online	Consulted as part of collective meeting
1. Rokeby Primary School	1. Smithton Primary	1. Dover District School
2. Hobart City High School	2. Redpa Primary	2. Woodbridge School
3. Oatlands District School	3. Forest Primary School	3. Bothwell District School
4. Bagdad Primary School	4. Edith Creek Primary School	4. Taroom High school
5. JRLF Herdsmans Cove Primary School	5. Stanley Primary School	5. West Coast Collective
6. Hobart College	6. King Island District School	6. Kempton Primary School
7. Kingston High School	7. Franklin Primary School	
8. Huonville High School and Trade Training Centre		
9. New Town Primary School		
10. North West Support School		
11. Reece High School		
12. Parklands High School		
13. Don College		
14. Miandetta Primary School		
15. Mowbray Heights Primary School		
16. South George Town Primary School		
17. Ravenswood Heights Primary School		
18. Launceston Big Picture School		
19. Campbell Town District School		
20. Bicheno Primary School		
21. St Helens District School		

Table 3: CET schools consulted

Visited in-person	Consulted online
1. St Pauls Catholic School	N/A
2. Mt Carmel College	
3. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School	
4. Marist Regional College	
5. St Anthony's Catholic School	
6. St Patrick's College	

Table 4: Independent schools consulted

Visited in-person	Consulted online
1. The Cottage School	1. Giant Steps Tasmania
2. Northern Christian School	
3. The Friends School	

Other in-person visits

1. Chigwell Child and Family Learning Centre
2. The Nest – Sorell Child and Family Learning Centre
3. Burnie Works
4. Project Y – Break O'Day Employment Connect

14.2 Appendix B: List of Submissions Received

Table 5: List of submissions received

#	RESPONDENT
1	AERO
2	AEU
3	AITSL
4	Anonymous Submission 1
5	Anonymous Submission 2
6	Anonymous Submission 3
7	Association for Children with Disability Tas
8	Australian School Library Association
9	B4 Early Years Coalition
10	D. Badcock
11	Beacon Foundation
12	Big Picture Australia
13	Burnie Works
14	R. G. Bury
15	Carers Tasmania
16	Catholic Education Tasmania
17	J. Celesti
18	Centre for Independent Studies
19	CPSU
20	CREATE Foundation
21	DECYP
22	L. Denny

#	RESPONDENT
23	T. Doe
24	Early Learning and Care Council of Australia
25	Elizabeth College School Association
26	M. Elliott
27	J. Ewington
28	M. Frost
29	B. Fuller
30	M. Garland
31	Glenorchy City Council
32	Grattan Institute
33	R. Harris
34	A. Harrison
35	M. Heferen-Faulkner
36	Independent Education Union Vic-Tas
37	Independent Schools Tasmania
38	P. Kearney
39	Launceston Grammar
40	Learning Creates Australia
41	D. Lewis
42	K. McMahon
43	L. McNair
44	NEAT

#	RESPONDENT
45	Office of Education Regulation
46	P. O'Halloran
47	K. Parker
48	A. Parrott
49	Peter Underwood Centre
50	Playgroup Tasmania
51	G. Proctor
52	Regional Development Australia
53	Regional Jobs Hub Network
54	J. Ridge
55	L. Robinson
56	M. Rowan
57	G. Rundle
58	Save the Children – 54 Reasons
59	M. Schmidt et al.
60	School Food Matters
61	P. Spratt
62	St Michael's Collegiate School
63	G. Suitor
64	TasCOSS
65	TasICT
66	Tasmanian CCYP
67	Tasmanian Principals Association
68	TASSO
69	M. Taylor
70	The Friends' School

#	RESPONDENT
71	The Smith Family
72	Thrive Group
73	K. Turnbull
74	University of Tasmania
75	UTAS School of Education
76	K. Waldock
77	I. Webb
78	P. Webb
79	G. White
80	Youth Network of Tasmania

14.3 Appendix C: Survey Questions

Table 6: Student Survey Questions

Question 1: Numerical response	What is your postcode?
Question 2: Single Choice	What year are you in? <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Kindergarten to Year 6▶ Years 7 to 10▶ Years 11 or 12▶ Other (please specify)
Question 3: Single Choice	What type of school are you enrolled in? <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Catholic▶ Independent▶ Government▶ I am home-schooled▶ Other (please specify)
Question 4: Likert Scale	How strongly do you agree with the following statements? <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. I attend school most days. (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)B. I am happy at school. (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)C. I receive extra support with my learning when I need it. (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)D. I think it is important to complete my schooling. (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)
Question 5: Free text	Imagine yourself at the end of school, what do you want school to have helped you become?
Question 6: Free text	If you could change one thing about your schooling, what would it be?

Table 7: Staff and Parent Survey Questions

Question 1: Multiple choice	<p>What is your connection to Tasmania’s school system?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ I am a parent of a school-aged child/children ▶ I work or used to work in the education system ▶ Both ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 2: Numerical response	<p>What is your postcode?</p>
Question 3: Multiple choice	<p>What level of schooling are your children currently attending?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Kindergarten to Year 2 ▶ Years 3 to 6 ▶ Years 7 to 10 ▶ Years 11 and 12 ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 4: Multiple choice	<p>What type of school are they enrolled in?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Government ▶ Catholic ▶ Independent ▶ My child/children are home-schooled ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 5: Likert Scale and Multiple choice	<p>Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.</p> <p>A. My child/children attend school regularly (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) [SUB-QUESTION] – If Disagree or Strongly Disagree – multiple choice: What action has been taken by the school to help your child with their attendance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Phone calls, emails, meetings to understand why ▶ Creating a safe environment ▶ Reasonable changes to schooling when they do attend (e.g., adjusted attendance hours) ▶ Working with my family ▶ Other (please specify) <p>B. My child/children participate in class (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) [SUB-QUESTION] – If Disagree or Strongly Disagree – multiple choice: What action has been taken by the school to help your child with their participation in class?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Creating a safe environment ▶ Encouraging small steps ▶ Working with my family ▶ Other (please specify)

**Question 5:
Likert Scale and
Multiple choice
(continued)**

- C. **My child/children is/are happy at school**
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)
[SUB-QUESTION] – If Disagree or Strongly Disagree – multiple choice:
What action has been taken by the school to help your child feel happy at school?
- ▶ Phone calls, emails, meetings to understand why
 - ▶ Creating a safe environment
 - ▶ Referrals to support
 - ▶ Working with my family
 - ▶ Encouraging participation
 - ▶ Wellbeing support
 - ▶ Other reasonable changes to schooling (please specify)
- D. **My child/children receive additional learning support when needed**
(Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)
[SUB-QUESTION] – If Disagree or Strongly Disagree – multiple choice:
What action has been taken by the school to help your child receive additional learning support when needed?
- ▶ Phone calls, emails, meetings to understand why
 - ▶ Creating a safe environment
 - ▶ Referrals to support
 - ▶ Working with my family
 - ▶ Specialist support
 - ▶ Wellbeing support
 - ▶ Other reasonable changes to schooling (please specify)

**Question 12:
Single choice**

- How many years of experience do you have working in the education system?
- ▶ Less than 5 years
 - ▶ 5-10 years
 - ▶ 11-20 years
 - ▶ More than 20 years

**Question 13:
Multiple choice**

- What is your current role in the education system?
- ▶ Teacher
 - ▶ School Leader (e.g. Principal, Deputy Principal)
 - ▶ Other educator (e.g. teacher assistant)
 - ▶ Professional Support Staff
(e.g. Speech Pathologist, Psychologist, School Health Nurse)
 - ▶ Administration/corporate staff
 - ▶ Retired/not currently working in school
 - ▶ Other (please specify)
-

Question 14: Multiple choice	<p>What school level do/did you predominantly work with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Kindergarten to Year 2 ▶ Years 3 to 6 ▶ Years 7 to 10 ▶ Years 11 and 12 ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 15: Multiple choice	<p>What type of school do/did you work at?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Government ▶ Catholic ▶ Independent ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 16: Single choice	<p>What is your employment type?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Part-time ▶ Full-time ▶ Casual/relief ▶ Other/retired
Question 6: Likert Scale	<p>How do you feel about your child/children's experience at school? (Not satisfied at all, Not very satisfied, I have had a mixed experience with my children, Somewhat satisfied, Satisfied, Very satisfied)</p>
Question 6a: Free text	<p>SUB-QUESTION: If Q6 answered – I have had a mixed experience with my children: What was the mixed experience?</p>
Question 7: Likert Scale	<p>How involved do you feel in your child/children's experience at school? (Not involved at all, Not very involved, I have had a mixed experience with my children, Somewhat involved, Involved, Very involved)</p>
Question 7a: Free text	<p>SUB-QUESTION: If Q7 answered – I have had a mixed experience with my children: What was the mixed experience?</p>
Question 8: Likert Scale	<p>Do you think your school is helping your child become who they want to be? (I have had a mixed experience with my children, No, Somewhat, Yes)</p>
Question 9: Free text	<p>How does your school help your child/children succeed?</p>
Question 10: Likert Scale	<p>How important is it to you that your child/children complete their schooling? (Not important at all, Somewhat unimportant, Somewhat important, Important, Very important)</p>

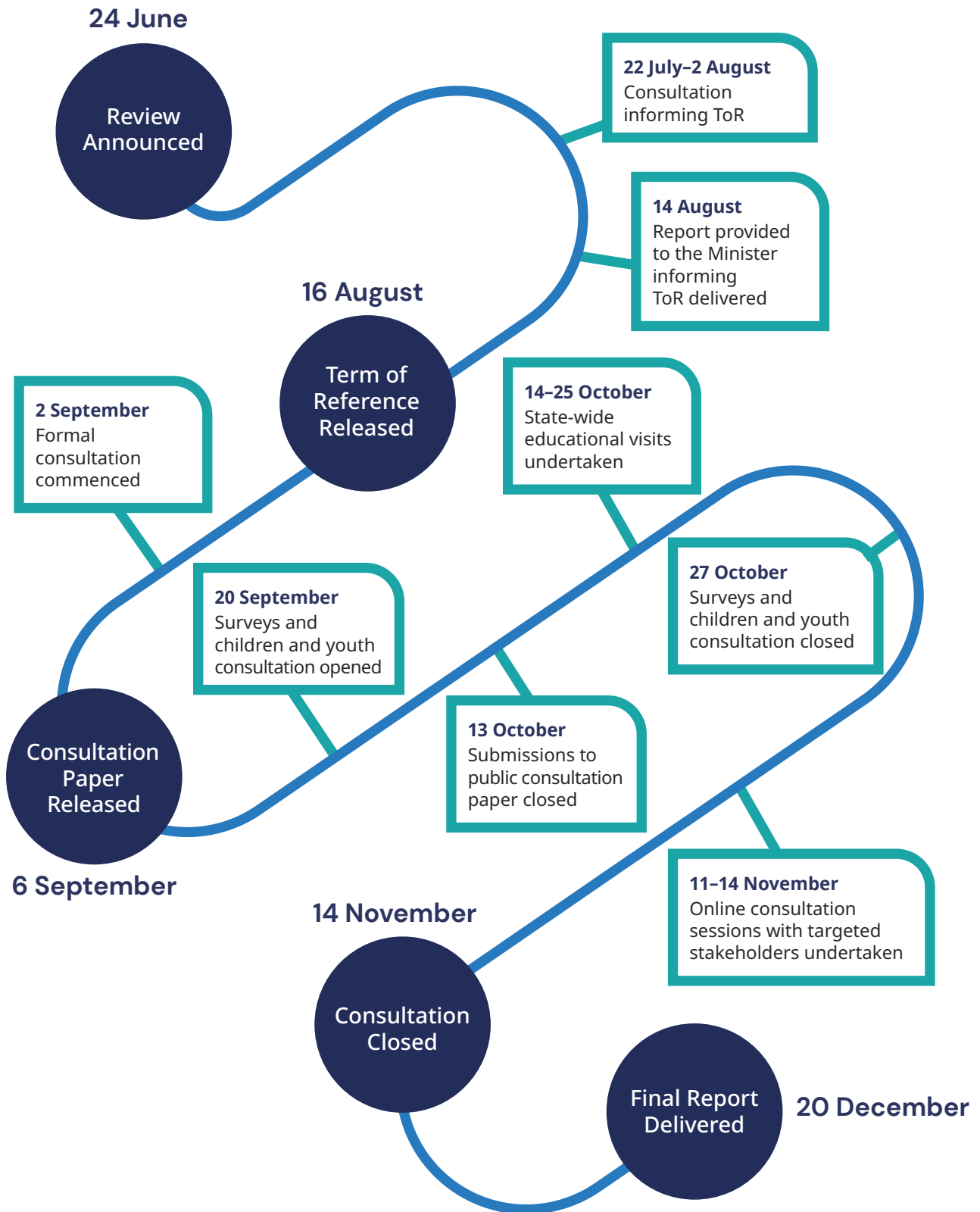
Question 11: Multiple choice	<p>At what point do you think schooling should finish for students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At the end of Year 10 ▶ At the end of Year 12 ▶ Once they have a job ▶ Once they get a traineeship or apprenticeship ▶ Once they turn 18 ▶ Other (please explain)
Question 27: Ranking Question	<p>Aside from increasing salaries, how else could Tasmania attract outstanding individuals into the teaching profession?</p> <p>(Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide access to high-quality professional development opportunities ▶ Clearly define career pathways ▶ Enhance teacher training programs to better support early career teachers ▶ Reduce teacher workloads ▶ Clarity about role of teachers ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 28: Ranking Question	<p>In your opinion, what is the most effective way to support teachers in their day-to-day roles?</p> <p>(Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reduce administrative tasks ▶ Increase classroom support ▶ Provide more time for planning and collaboration ▶ Provide access to high-quality professional development opportunities ▶ Mentoring and support opportunities ▶ Access to learning resources ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 29: Ranking Question	<p>How can we better support current and future school leaders to be successful in their role?</p> <p>(Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Leadership training and development programs ▶ Peer mentoring and coaching opportunities ▶ Improved access to resources for school management ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 30: Free text	<p>Please provide any additional comments or suggestions on how to improve the effectiveness and well-being of Tasmania's education workforce.</p>

Question 31: Ranking Question	<p>What are the key factors that enable teachers and school leaders to implement new initiatives effectively?</p> <p>(Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Professional development and training ▶ Sufficient planning and preparation time ▶ Ongoing support for implementation, including post-implementation support ▶ Clear communication and guidelines ▶ System level support and/or collaboration with communities of practice ▶ Set fewer but clearer priorities ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 32: Free text	<p>What Tasmanian education reform worked well and why?</p>
Question 17: Ranking Question	<p>What is the main reason for students to complete their schooling?</p> <p>(Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To finish Year 12 ▶ To be able to go to university ▶ To be able to do an apprenticeship or traineeship ▶ To be able to get a job ▶ To help their community ▶ Other (please explain)
Question 18: Likert Scale	<p>How does the community's thoughts about education affect what children want to do in the future?</p> <p>(Not at all influential, Not very influential, Somewhat influential, Very influential, Extremely influential)</p>
Question 19: Likert Scale	<p>How well do you think Tasmanian education supports students to aim high?</p> <p>(Very poorly, Poorly, Average, Well, Very well)</p>
Question 20: Ranking Question	<p>What is the most important role of schools?</p> <p>(Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To help students learn ▶ To teach important skills like reading, writing, and maths ▶ To develop social skills and confidence ▶ To prepare for jobs and further education and training ▶ To create a safe and supportive environment ▶ To let students explore their interests ▶ Other (please specify)

Question 21: Ranking Question	<p>What do students need to stay engaged in school? (Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Early help when they start to struggle or lose interest ▶ Family support ▶ Schools engaging with families and communities ▶ Additional help for learning ▶ Fun and interesting activities ▶ Fun and interesting subjects ▶ Strong friendships with other students ▶ Strong teacher-student relationships ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 22: Free text	<p>What's one thing you would suggest to boost student engagement?</p>
Question 23: Ranking Question	<p>As students get older, what helps them make informed learning and career choices? (Please rank your answers, with 1 being the main reason)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Better understanding of subject pathways ▶ Schools engaging with families and communities ▶ Access to career counselling ▶ Opportunities for training and apprenticeships ▶ Opportunities for work experience ▶ High-quality teachers ▶ Schools working together with local businesses ▶ The ability to learn in different ways and in different places ▶ Other (please specify)
Question 24: Likert Scale	<p>How well does Tasmania's education system value, recognise and support all forms of education after school (e.g. TAFE, vocational education and training, university)?</p> <p>(Very poorly, Poorly, Average, Well, Very well)</p>
Question 25: Free text	<p>How might Tasmania's education system better recognise and support all forms of education after school?</p>
Question 33: Free text	<p>The review is interested in hearing about good things that are happening in schools, for example support for students who are struggling. What are some good things you are aware of?</p>
Question 34: Free text	<p>If you could change one thing about school, what would it be?</p>

14.4 Appendix D: Timeline of Review Activities, 2024

Figure 18: Timeline of Review Activities, 2024



14.5 Appendix E: Population Projections by LGA

The table below profiles Treasury's projections for the number of school-aged young people (those aged 5 to 19) between 2025 and 2035, by Local Government Area. Also provided is the change in population. This table uses the medium growth projection.

Table 8: Population Projections by LGA

LGA	2025	2035 projection	Change	Change (%)
Break O'Day	849	683	-167	-20%
Brighton	4,435	4,541	106	2%
Burnie	3,917	3,472	-445	-11%
Central Coast	3,888	3,398	-489	-13%
Central Highlands	371	330	-41	-11%
Circular Head	1,544	1,312	-231	-15%
Clarence	11,074	11,086	12	0%
Derwent Valley	2,105	1,933	-172	-8%
Devonport	4,719	4,177	-542	-11%
Dorset	1,124	877	-247	-22%
Flinders	95	64	-31	-33%
George Town	1,161	906	-254	-22%
Glamorgan-Spring Bay	495	436	-59	-12%
Glenorchy	8,613	8,907	294	3%
Hobart	8,695	8,636	-60	-1%
Huon Valley	3,341	3,173	-168	-5%
Kentish	1,070	991	-78	-7%
King Island	262	228	-34	-13%
Kingborough	7,587	7,233	-354	-5%
Latrobe	2,047	1,994	-53	-3%
Launceston	12,856	12,178	-677	-5%

LGA	2025	2035 projection	Change	Change (%)
Meander Valley	3,675	3,302	-373	-10%
Northern Midlands	2,358	2,186	-172	-7%
Sorell	3,029	3,096	67	2%
Southern Midlands	1,215	1,148	-67	-6%
Tasman	290	240	-50	-17%
Waratah-Wynyard	2,494	2,168	-326	-13%
West Coast	620	526	-94	-15%
West Tamar	4,690	4,443	-248	-5%
Tasmania	98,618	93,664	4,954	-5%

14.6 Appendix F: The Economic Value of Education in Tasmania

The Australia Institute's 2023 report included modelling, which estimates the increase in Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from assumed increases in school completion.

The Review used this modelling to estimate what the economic benefits of increasing school completion could be in Tasmania, based on the assumptions outlined in the Report. The Australia Institute's modelling assumes a low case where there is a 3.8 percentage point increase in school completion, and a high case of 6.2 percentage points. The Review engaged with Treasury to peer review its approach.

The output of this modelling is based on 2022 nominal dollars and estimates:

- ▶ for one cohort, they would earn \$3 million in additional wages per annum in the low case, and \$4 million in the high case;
- ▶ over 20 years, the cumulating annual wage increase for a cohort is estimated at around \$50 million in the low case, and \$85 million in the high case;
- ▶ in terms of Tasmania's economy, one cohort would increase GSP by around \$5 million per annum in the low case, and \$7 million in the high case; and
- ▶ over 20 years, the cumulating annual GSP estimated increase would be around \$90 million in the low case, and \$150 million in the high case.

The estimates may not seem significant in Tasmania's approximately \$40 billion economy. However, the estimated 20-year cumulative GSP increase is only for one cohort. If the same increase in Year 12 completers were replicated year after year, each cohort would make the same additional contribution (in fact there would likely be multiplying effects that would increase the benefits further). Over time, therefore, there would be a significant compounding benefit that would make an appreciable positive impact on Tasmania's GSP (and naturally its productivity).

The Australia Institute states that the outputs from its model are conservative. The modelling does not take into account savings to governments and taxpayers from lower expenditure costs, given the research indicates that persons who complete Year 12 are less likely to rely on income support, have better health outcomes and therefore lower health costs, and have lower engagement with police and justice systems.

The Review acknowledges that these are estimates based on a model produced for another purpose and to which has a range of assumptions. In the time available for this Review, undertaking a specific exercise to produce a similar model for Tasmania was not possible.

14.7 Appendix G: Summary of Jurisdictional Year 12 Certification Requirements

There are many aspects that contribute towards determining a student's eligibility for their state's Year 12 certificate, and it is variations in these that contribute to incomparability between states. The full range of differences is beyond the purposes of this Report. However, the Review highlights 3 key aspects of difference:

1. The minimum number of hours worth of study students have enrolled in;
2. the minimum number of hours worth of study students have competed to a set standard (specific set standards also differ by jurisdiction); and
3. successful evidence for completion of defined literacy and numeracy standards.

In Tasmania, in order to achieve the TCE, a student needs to:

- ▶ be enrolled in 1,200 hours worth of study over their Year 11/12 years – in Tasmania this may sometimes be called 120 credit points, where 1 point is equivalent to 10 hours
- ▶ Complete all of these 1,200 hours (120 points) to a satisfactory standard (with 80 of the 120 points needing to be from a course at 'level 2 difficulty' or higher).
- ▶ Complete a course at a high enough level that provides evidence of a literacy standard, and the same for a course that provides evidence of a numeracy standard.

Some states require minimum hours of 'completion', some require minimum hours of 'achievement', while others use a mix of both (minimum hours of enrolment PLUS a smaller minimum hours of achievement). As one example, Western Australia requires enrolment in 1,100 hours worth of study and requires a C-level rating in 770 hours to attain the Year 12 certificate.

Most states require students to demonstrate literacy and numeracy standards as part of their certificate. Some states have tied this to NAPLAN standards, meaning a student can have already met these requirements in Year 9, before entering their senior secondary years. Tasmania requires these standards to be earned through specific courses, and in order to attain the literacy/numeracy standard these courses must be passed at a higher rating ('SA' rating) than the lower requirement to earn the hours of achievement ('PA' Rating).

The table below has been compiled from a desktop review of the websites of the various state and territory senior secondary certification bodies. It is not intended as a definitive review of all the differences between the various certifications. Instead it is intended to present just a few of these differences that make comparison of the certification rates across states difficult.

Table 9: Summary of Year 12 Certification Requirements

Jurisdiction	Certificate Name	# Hours enrolled	# Hours achieved at standard	Literacy/ Numeracy required	Obtainable from NAPLAN
Tasmania	TCE	1,200	1,200	Yes	No
New South Wales	HSC	1,320	N/A (A 'genuine attempt' on minimum 50% of coursework is required)	Yes	Yes
Victoria	VCE	800	800 (Note: Decision on satisfactory completion can be distinct from assessment levels of achievement for lower level difficulty courses)	No	N/A
Queensland	QCE	1,100	1,100	Yes	No
SA*	SACE	1,200	660 (660 out of the 1,200 enrolled hours required at C rating)	Yes	Yes
	Record of Achievement	120	120	No	N/A
WA	WACE	1,100	770	Yes	Yes
NT	SACE	1,200	660 (660 out of the 1,200 enrolled hours required at C rating)	Yes	Yes
ACT	SSC	935	935	Yes	Yes

*South Australia reports attainment rates of 2 separate certificates, the SACE and the Record of Achievement, with the state's Year 12 certification rate being the proportion of Year 12 aged student who achieved either of these certificates.

14.8 Appendix H: Tasmania’s Later School Finishing Age and National Comparisons

ABS data from the Survey of Education and Work shows there is a consistent trend whereby Tasmanians who are aged between 17 to 18, and 18 to 19, lag behind their national counterparts in terms of attainment. However, there is considerable ‘catch up’ that appears at the 19 to 20 age range. The likely explanation for this trend is the difference in finishing ages for schooling between Tasmania and other states.

Figure 19: SEW 2022 – Proportion with highest level education Year 12 or Certificate III

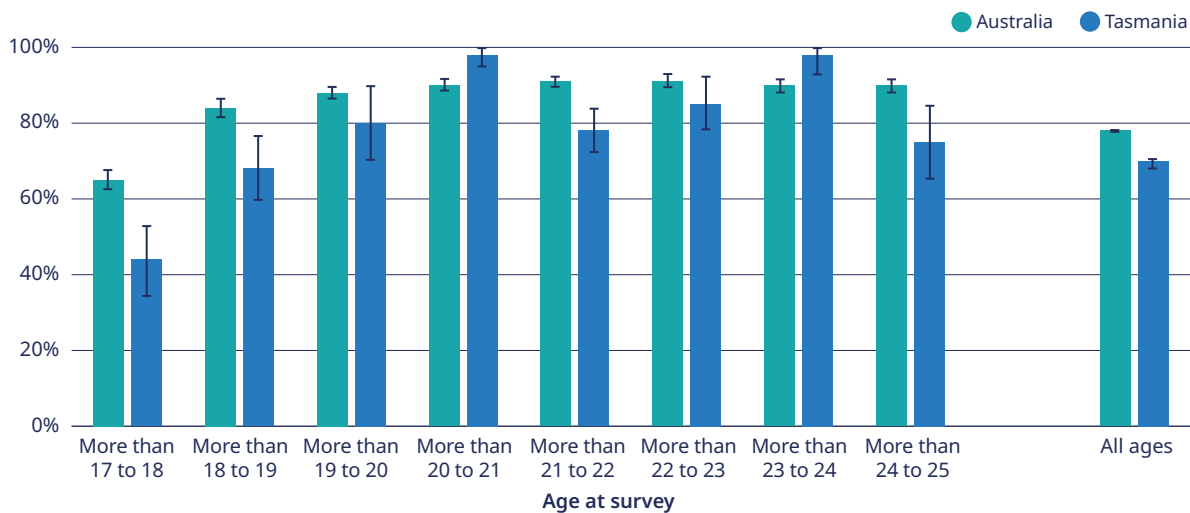


Figure 20: SEW 2023 – Proportion with highest level education Year 12 or Certificate III

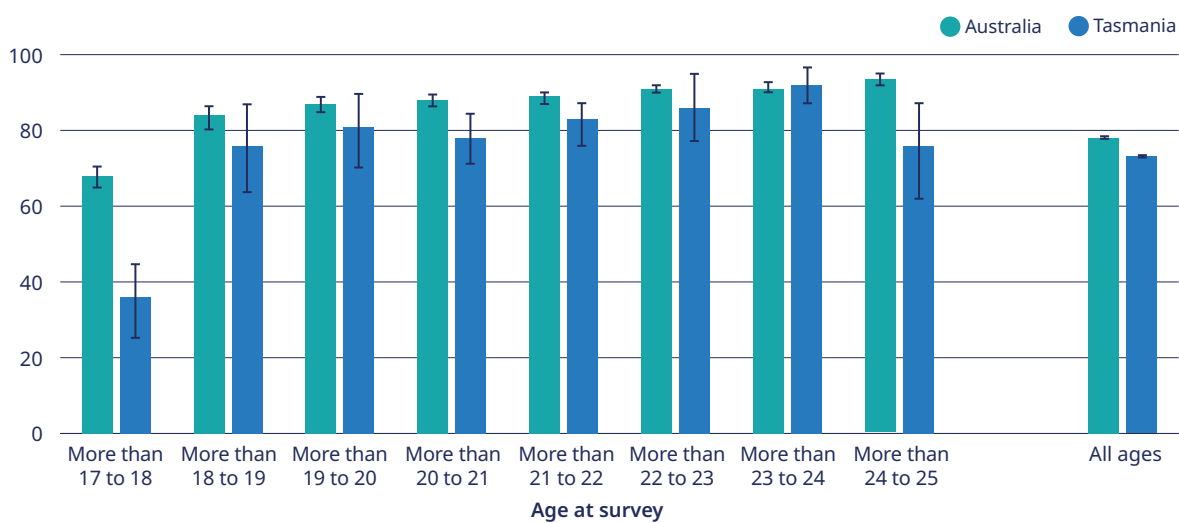
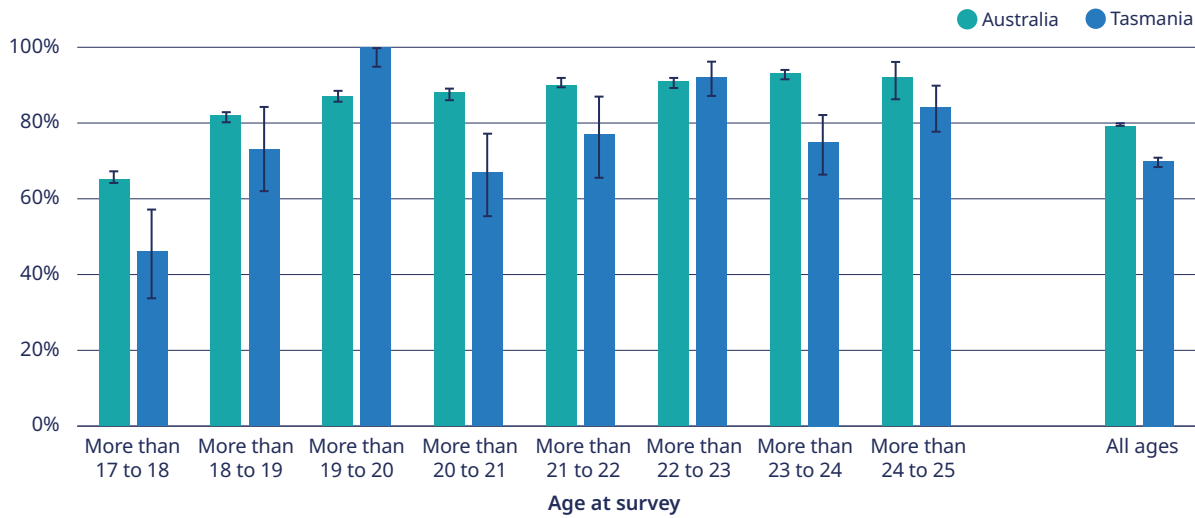


Figure 21: SEW 2024 – Proportion with highest level education Year 12 or Certificate III

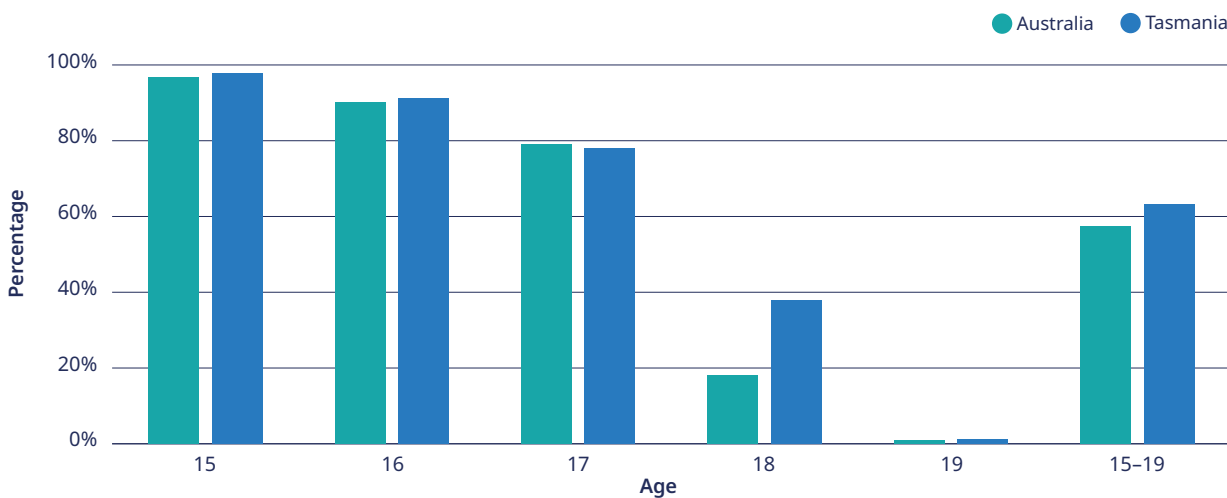


The Review constructed the above charts from publicly available data, using the ABS TableBuilder product (www.abs.gov.au).

The Review cautions against reading the exact percentages that are produced as accurate, and instead highlights the trend across year levels which appears consistent.

Complementing the SEW data, the ABS publishes participation rates in schools by age in its Schools 2023 publication. The following chart compares Tasmania to Australia for all school students (including those who are part time). There is a marked difference in participation rates for 18 year olds, which adds further evidence that Tasmania’s relatively later school finishing age has an impact on national comparisons of attainment at certain age cohorts.

Figure 22: ABS schools – Capped school participation rates by age



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